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# LEE'S CENTENNIAL

AN · ADDRESS · BY  
CHARLES · FRANCIS · ADAMS  
DELIVERED · AT · LEXINGTON · VIRGINIA  
SATURDAY · JANUARY · 19 · 1907  
ON · THE · INVITATION · OF  
THE · PRESIDENT · AND · FACULTY · OF  
WASHINGTON · AND · LEE  
UNIVERSITY



BOSTON AND NEW YORK  
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY  
The Riverside Press, Cambridge  
1907





WITH COMPLIMENTS OF  
CHARLES F. ADAMS,  
23 COURT ST., BOSTON.

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## LEE'S CENTENNIAL

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HAVING occasion once to refer in discussion to certain of the founders of our Massachusetts Commonwealth, I made the assertion that their force "lay in character;" and I added that in saying this I paid, and meant to pay, the highest tribute which in my judgment could be paid to a community or to its typical men. Quite a number of years have passed since I so expressed myself, and in those years I have grown older — materially older; but I now repeat even more confidently than I then uttered them, these other words — "The older I have grown and the more I have studied and seen, the greater in my esteem, as an element of strength in a people, has Character become, and the less in the conduct of human affairs have I thought of mere capacity or even genius. With Character a race will become great, even though as stupid and unassimilating as the Romans; without Character, any race will in the long run prove a failure, though it may number in it individuals having all the brilliancy of the Jews, crowned with the genius of Napoleon." We

are here to-day to commemorate the birth of Robert Edward Lee, — essentially a Man of Character. That he was such all I think recognize; for, having so impressed himself throughout life on his cotemporaries, he stands forth distinctly as a man of character on the page of the historian. Yet it is not easy to put in words exactly what is meant when we agree in attributing character to this man or to that, or withholding it from another; — conceding it, for instance, to Epaminondas, Cato and Wellington, but withholding it from Themistocles, Cæsar or Napoleon. Though we can illustrate what we mean by examples which all will accept, we cannot define. Emerson in his later years (1866) wrote a paper on “Character;” but in it he makes no effort at a definition. “Character,” he said, “denotes habitual self-possession, habitual regard to interior and constitutional motives, a balance not to be overset or easily disturbed by outward events and opinion, and by implication points to the source of right motive. We sometimes employ the word to express the strong and consistent will of men of mixed motive; but, when used with emphasis, it points to what no events can change, that is a will built of the reason of things.” The more matter-of-fact lexicographer defines Character as “the sum of the inherited and acquired



ethical traits which give to a person his moral individuality." To pursue further the definition of what is generally understood would be wearisome, so I will content myself with quoting this simile from a disciple of Emerson — "The virtues of a superior man are like the wind; the virtues of a common man are like the grass; the grass, when the wind passes over it, bends."

That America has been rich in these men of superior virtues before whom the virtues of the common man have bent, is matter of history. It has also been our making as a community. Such in New England was John Winthrop, whose lofty example still influences the community whose infancy he fathered. Such in New York was John Jay. Such, further south, was John Caldwell Calhoun, essentially a man of exalted character and representative of his community, quite irrespective of his teachings and their outcome. Such unquestionably in Virginia were George Washington and John Marshall; and, more recently, Robert Edward Lee. A stock, of which those three were the consummate flower, by its fruits is known.

Here to commemorate the centennial of the birth of Lee, I do not propose to enter into any eulogium of the man, to recount the well-known events of his career, or to estimate the

final place to be assigned him among great military characters. All this has been sufficiently done by others far better qualified for the task. Eschewing superlatives also, I shall institute no comparisons. One of a community which then looked upon Lee as a renegade from the flag he had sworn to serve, and a traitor to the Nation which had nurtured him, in my subordinate place I directly confronted Lee throughout the larger portion of the War of Secession. During all those years there was not a day in which my heart would not have been gladdened had I heard that his also had been the fate which at Chancellorsville befell his great lieutenant; and yet more glad had it been the fortune of the command in which I served to visit that fate upon him. Forty more years have since gone. Their close finds me here to-day — certainly a much older, and, in my own belief at least, a wiser man. Nay, more! A distinguished representative of Massachusetts, speaking in the Senate of the United States shortly after Lee's death upon the question of a return to Lee's family of the ancestral estate of Arlington, used these words: "Eloquent Senators have already characterized the proposition and the traitor it seeks to commemorate. I am not disposed to speak of General Lee. It is enough to say he stands high in the catalogue of those who

have imbrued their hands in their country's blood. I hand him over to the avenging pen of History." It so chanced that not only am I also from the State of Massachusetts, but, for more than a dozen years, I have been the chosen head of its typical historical society, — the society chartered under the name and seal of the Commonwealth considerably more than a century ago, — the parent of all similar societies. By no means would I on that account seem to ascribe to myself any representative character as respects the employment of History's pen, whether avenging or otherwise;<sup>1</sup> nor do I appear here as representative of the Massachusetts Historical Society: but, a whole generation having passed away since Charles Sumner uttered the words I have quoted, I do, on your invitation, chance to stand here to-day, as I have said, both a Massachusetts man and the head of the Massachusetts Historical Society, to pass judgment upon General Lee. The situation is thus to a degree dramatic.

Though, in what I am about to say I shall

<sup>1</sup> Possibly, and more properly, this attribute might be considered as pertaining rather to James Ford Rhodes, also a member of the Society referred to, and at present a Vice-President of it. Mr. Rhodes' characterization of General Lee, and consequent verdict on the course pursued by him at the time under discussion, can be found on reference to his *History of the United States* (vol. iii, p. 413).

confine myself to a few points only, to them I have given no little study, and on them have much reflected. Let me, however, once for all, and with emphasis, in advance say I am not here to instruct Virginians either in the history of their State or the principles of Constitutional Law; nor do I make any pretence to profundity whether of thought or insight. On the contrary I shall attempt nothing more than the elaboration of what has already been said by others as well as by me, such value or novelty as may belong to my share in the occasion being attributable solely to the point of view of the speaker. In that respect, I submit, the situation is not without novelty; for, so far as I am aware, never until now has one born and nurtured in Massachusetts — a typical bred-in-the-bone Yankee, if you please — addressed at its invitation a Virginian audience, on topics relating to the War of Secession and its foremost Confederate military character.

Coming directly to my subject, my own observation tells me that the charge still most commonly made against Lee in that section of the common country to which I belong and with which I sympathize is that, in plain language, he was false to his flag, — educated at the national academy, an officer of the United States Army, he abjured his allegiance and



bore arms against the government he had sworn to uphold. In other words he was a military traitor. I state the charge in the tersest language possible; and the facts are as stated. Having done so, and admitting the facts, I add as the result of much patient study and most mature reflection, that under similar conditions I would myself have done exactly what Lee did. In fact, I do not see how I, placed as he was placed, could have done otherwise.

And now fairly entered on the first phase of my theme, I must hurry on; for I have much ground to traverse, and scant time in which to cover it. I must be concise, but must not fail to be explicit. And first as to the right or wrong of secession, this theoretically; then practically, as to what secession in the year of grace 1861 necessarily involved.

If ever a subject had been thoroughly thrashed out, — so thrashed out in fact as to offer no possible gleaning of novelty, — it might be inferred that this was that subject. Yet I venture the opinion that such is not altogether the case. I do so moreover not without weighing words. The difficulty with the discussion has to my mind been that throughout it has in essence been too abstract, legal and technical, and not sufficiently historical, sociological and human. It has turned on

the wording of instruments, in themselves not explicit, and has paid far too little regard to traditions and local ties. As matter of fact, however, actual men as they live, move and have their being in this world, caring little for parchments or theory, are the creatures of heredity and local attachments. Coming directly to the point, I maintain that every man in the eleven States seceding from the Union had in 1861, whether he would or no, to decide for himself whether to adhere to his State or to the Nation; and I finally assert that, whichever way he decided, if only he decided honestly, putting self-interest behind him, he decided right.

Paradoxical as it sounds, I contend, moreover, that this was indisputably so. It was a question of Sovereignty — State or National; and from a decision of that question there was in a seceded State escape for no man. Yet when the national Constitution was framed and adopted that question was confessedly left undecided; and intentionally so left. More than this, even: the Federal Constitution was theoretically and avowedly based on the idea of a divided sovereignty, in utter disregard of the fact that, when a final issue is presented, sovereignty does not admit of division.

Yet even this last proposition, basic as it is,

I have heard denied. I have frequently had it replied that, as matter of fact, sovereignty is frequently divided, — divided in domestic life, — divided in the apportionment of the functions of government. Those thus arguing, however, do so confusedly. They confound sovereignty with an agreed, but artificial, *modus vivendi*. The original constitution of the United States was, in fact, in this important respect just that, — a *modus vivendi*: — under the circumstances a most happy and ingenious expedient for overcoming an obstacle in the way of nationality, otherwise insurmountable. To accomplish the end they had in view, the framers had recourse to a metaphysical abstraction, under which it was left to time and the individual to decide, when the final issue should arise, if it ever did arise — as they all devoutly hoped it never would arise — where sovereignty lay. There is nothing in connection with the history of our development more interesting from the historical point of view than the growth, the gradual development of the spirit of nationality, carrying with it sovereignty. It has usually been treated as a purely legal question to be settled on the verbal construction of the instruments, — “We, the People,” etc. Webster so treated it. In all confidence I maintain that it is

not a legal question; it is purely an historical question. As such, furthermore, it has been decided, and correctly decided, both ways at different times in different sections, and at different times in opposite ways in the same section.

And this was necessarily and naturally so; for, as development progressed along various lines and in different localities, the sense of allegiance shifted. Two whole generations passed away between the adoption of the Federal Constitution and the War of Secession. When that war broke out in 1861 the last of the framers had been a score of years in his grave; but evidence is conclusive that until the decennium between 1830 and 1840 the belief was nearly universal that in case of a final, unavoidable issue, sovereignty resided in the State, and to it allegiance was due. The law was so laid down in the Kentucky resolves of 1798; and to the law as thus laid down Webster assented. Chancellor Rawle so propounded the law; and such was the understanding of so unprejudiced and acute a foreign observer as De Tocqueville.<sup>1</sup>

The technical argument — the logic of the proposition — seems plain and, to my thought, unanswerable. The original sovereignty was indisputably in the State; in

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.



order to establish a nationality certain attributes of sovereignty were ceded by the States to a common central organization; all attributes not thus specifically conceded were reserved to the States, and no attributes of moment were to be construed as conceded by implication. There is no attribute of sovereignty so important as allegiance, — citizenship. So far all is elementary. Now we come to the crux of the proposition. Not only was allegiance — the right to define and establish citizenship — not among the attributes specifically conceded by the several States to the central nationality, but, on the contrary, it was explicitly reserved, the instrument declaring that “the citizens of each State” should be entitled to “all Privileges and Immunities of Citizens in the several States.” Ultimate allegiance was, therefore, due to the State which defined and created citizenship, and not to the central organization which accepted as citizens whomever the States pronounced to be such.<sup>1</sup>

Thus far I have never been able to see where room was left for doubt. Citizenship

<sup>1</sup> See W. H. Fleming, *Slavery and the Race Problem at the South*, pp. 19, 20. An authoritative definition of United States citizenship, as distinct from the citizenship of a State, was first given in the fourteenth amendment to the Federal Constitution, ratified in 1868. See J. S. Wise, *A Treatise on American Citizenship*, pp. 6, 13, 31.

was an attribute recognized by the Constitution as originating with, and of course belonging to, the several States. But, speaking historically and in a philosophical rather than in a legal spirit, it is little more than a commonplace to assert that one great safeguard of the Anglo-Saxon race — what might almost be termed its political palladium — has ever been that hard, if at times illogical, common sense which, recognizing established custom as a binding rule of action, found its embodiment in what we are wont with pride to term the Common Law. Now, just as there can, I think, be no question as to the source of citizenship and, consequently, as to sovereignty, when the Constitution was originally adopted, there can be equally little question that during the lives of the two succeeding generations a custom of nationality grew up which became the accepted Common Law of the land, and practically binding as such. This was true in the South as well as the North, though the custom was more hardened into accepted law in the latter than in the former; but the growth and acceptance as law of the custom of nationality even in the South was incontrovertibly shown in the very act of secession, — the seceding States at once crystallizing into a Confederacy. Nationality was assumed as a thing of course.

But the metaphysical abstraction of a divided sovereignty, none the less, bridged the chasm. As a *modus vivendi* it did its work. I have called it a metaphysical abstraction; but it was also a practical arrangement resulting in great advantages. It might be illogical, and fraught with possible disputes and consequent dangers; but it was an institution. And so it naturally came to pass that in many of the States a generation grew up, dating from the War of 1812, who, gravitating steadily and more and more strongly to nationality, took a wholly different view of allegiance. For them Story laid down the law; Webster was their mouthpiece; at one time it looked as if Jackson was to be their armed exponent. They were, moreover, wholly within their right. The sovereignty was confessedly divided; and it was for them to elect. The movements of both science and civilization were behind the nationalists. The railroad obliterated State lines, while it unified the nation. What did the foreign immigrants, now swarming across the ocean, care for States? They knew only the Nation. Brought up in Europe, the talk of State sovereignty was to them foolishness. Its alphabet was incomprehensible. In a word, it too "was caviare to the general."

Then the inevitable issue arose; and it

arose over African slavery; and slavery was sectional. The States south of a given line were arrayed against the States north of that line. Owing largely to slavery, and the practical exclusion of immigrants because thereof, the States of the South had never undergone nationalization at all to the extent those of the North had undergone it. The growing influence and power of the national government, the sentiment inspired by the wars in which we had been engaged, the rapidly improving means of communication and intercourse, had produced their effects in the South; but in degree far less than in the North. Thus the curious result was brought about that, when, at last, the long deferred issue confronted the country, and the *modus vivendi* of two generations was brought to a close, those who believed in national sovereignty constituted the conservative majority, striving for the preservation of what then was, — the existing nineteenth-century Nation, — while those who passionately adhered to State sovereignty, treading in the footsteps of the fathers, had become eighteenth-century reactionists. Legally, each had right on his side. The theory of a divided Sovereignty had worked itself out to its logical consequence. “Under which King, Bezonian?” — and every man had to “speak or die.”



In the North the situation was simple. State and Nation stood together. The question of allegiance did not present itself, for the two sovereignties merged. It was otherwise in the South; and there the question became, not legal or constitutional, but practical. The life of the Nation had endured so long, the ties and ligaments had become so numerous and interwoven that, all theories to the contrary notwithstanding, a peaceable secession from the Union — a virtual exercise of State sovereignty — had become impossible. If those composing the several dissatisfied communities would only keep their tempers under restraint, and exercise an almost unlimited patience, a theoretical divided sovereignty, maintained through the agency and intervention of the Supreme Court, — in other words the perpetuation of the *modus vivendi*, — was altogether practicable; and probably this was what the framers had in mind under such a contingency as had now arisen. But that, after seventy years of Union and nationalization, a peaceable and friendly taking to pieces was possible, is now, as then it was, scarcely thinkable. Certainly, with a most vivid recollection of the state of sectional feeling which then existed, I do not believe there was a man in the United States — I am confi-

dent there was not a woman in the South — who fostered self-delusion to the extent of believing that the change was to come about without a recourse to force. In other words practical Secession was revolution theoretically legal. Why waste time and breath in discussion! — The situation becomes manifestly impossible of continuance where the issue between heated men, with weapons handy, is over a metaphysical distinction involving vast material and moral consequences. Lee, with intuitive common sense, struck the nail squarely on the head when amidst the Babel of discordant tongues he wrote to his son — “It is idle to talk of secession;” the national government as it then was “can only be dissolved by revolution.” That struggle of dissolution might be longer and fiercer, — as it was, — or shorter, and more wordy than blood-letting, — as the seceding States confidently believed would prove to be the case, — but a struggle there would be.

Historically, such were the conditions to which natural processes of development had brought the common country at the mid-decennium of the century. People had to elect; the *modus vivendi* was at an end. — Was the State sovereign; or was the Nation sovereign? And, with a shock of genuine surprise that any doubt should exist on that head, eleven

States arrayed themselves on the side of the Sovereignty of the State and claimed the unquestioning allegiance of their citizens; and I think it not unsafe to assert that nowhere did the original spirit of State Sovereignty and allegiance to the State then survive in greater intensity and more unquestioning form than in Virginia, — the “Old Dominion,” — the mother of States and of Presidents. And here I approach a sociological factor in the problem more subtle and also more potent than any legal consideration. It has no standing in Court: but the historian may not ignore it; while, with the biographer of Lee, it is crucial. Upon it judgment hinges. I have not time to consider how or why such a result came about, but of the fact there can, I hold, be no question, — State pride, a sense of individuality, has immemorially entered more largely and more intensely into Virginia and Virginians than into any other section or community of the country. Only in South Carolina and among Carolinians, on this continent, was a somewhat similar pride of locality and descent to be found. There was in it a flavor of the Hidalgo, — or of the pride which the Macgregors and Campbells took in their clan and country. In other words, the Virginian and the Carolinian had in the middle of the last century not un-

dergone nationalization to any appreciable extent.

But this, it will be replied, though true of the ordinary man and citizen, should not have been true of the graduate of the military academy, the officer of the Army of the United States. Winfield Scott and George H. Thomas did not so construe their allegiance; when the issue was presented, they remained true to their flag and to their oaths. Robert E. Lee, false to his oath and flag, was a renegade! The answer is brief and to the point: — the conditions in the several cases were not the same, — neither Scott nor Thomas was Lee. It was our Boston Dr. Holmes who long ago declared that the child's education begins about two hundred and fifty years before it is born; and it is quite impossible to separate any man — least of all, perhaps, a full-blooded Virginian — from his prenatal traditions and living environment. From them he drew his being; in them he exists. Robert E. Lee was the embodiment of those conditions, the creature of that environment, — a Virginian of Virginians. His father was "Light Horse Harry" Lee, a devoted follower of Washington; but in January, 1792, "Light Horse Harry" wrote to Mr. Madison: "No consideration on earth could induce me to act a part, however gratifying to me,

which could be construed into disregard of, or faithlessness to, this Commonwealth;" and later, when in 1798 the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions were under discussion, "Light Horse Harry" exclaimed in debate, "Virginia is my country; her will I obey, however lamentable the fate to which it may subject me." Born in this environment, nurtured in these traditions, to ask Lee to raise his hand against Virginia was like asking Montrose or the MacCallum More to head a force designed for the subjection of the Highlands and the destruction of the clans. Where such a stern election is forced upon a man as then confronted Lee, the single thing the fair-minded investigator has to take into account is the loyalty, the single-mindedness of the election. Was it devoid of selfishness, — was it free from any baser and more sordid worldly motive, — ambition, pride, jealousy, revenge or self-interest? To this question there can, in the case of Lee, be but one answer. When, after long and trying mental wrestling, he threw in his fate with Virginia, he knowingly sacrificed everything which man prizes most, — his dearly beloved home, his means of support, his professional standing, his associates, a brilliant future assured to him. Born a slaveholder in a race of slaveholders, he was himself no defender, much less an advocate of

slavery; on the contrary, he did not hesitate to pronounce it in his place "a moral and political evil." Later, he manumitted his slaves. He did not believe in secession; as a right reserved under the Constitution he pronounced it "idle talk:" but, as a Virginian, he also added, "if the Government is disrupted, I shall return to my native State and share the miseries of my people, and save in defence will draw my sword on none." Next to his high sense of allegiance to Virginia was Lee's pride in his profession. He was a soldier; as such rank, and the possibility of high command and great achievement, were very dear to him. His choice put rank and command behind him. He quietly and silently made the greatest sacrifice a soldier can be asked to make. With war plainly impending, the foremost place in the army of which he was an officer was now tendered him; his answer was to lay down the commission he already held. Virginia had been drawn into the struggle; and, though he recognized no necessity for the state of affairs, "in my own person," he wrote, "I had to meet the question whether I should take part against my native State; I have not been able to make up my mind to raise my hand against my relatives, my children, my home." It may have been treason to take this position; the man who took it, uttering these



words and sacrificing as he sacrificed, may have been technically a renegade to his flag, — if you please, false to his allegiance; but he stands awaiting sentence at the bar of history in very respectable company. Associated with him are, for instance, William of Orange, known as The Silent, John Hampden, the original *Pater Patriae*, Oliver Cromwell, the Protector of the English Commonwealth, Sir Harry Vane, once a governor of Massachusetts, and George Washington, a Virginian of note. In the throng of other offenders I am also gratified to observe certain of those from whom I not unproudly claim descent. They were, one and all, in the sense referred to, false to their oaths — forsworn. As to Robert E. Lee, individually, I can only repeat what I have already said, — if in all respects similarly circumstanced, I hope I should have been filial and unselfish enough to have done as Lee did.”<sup>1</sup> Such an utterance on my part may be “traitorous;” but I here render that homage.

In Massachusetts, however, I could not even in 1861 have been so placed; for, be it because of better or worse, Massachusetts was not Virginia; — no more Virginia than England once was Scotland, or the Lowlands the Highlands. The environment, the ideals, were

<sup>1</sup> See *Lee at Appomattox and Other Papers* (second edition), pp. 414–416.

in no respect the same. In Virginia, Lee was Macgregor; and, where Macgregor sat, there was the head of the table.

Into Lee's subsequent military career, there is no call here to enter; nor shall I undertake to compare him with other great military characters whether contemporaneous or of all time. As I said when I began, the topic has been thoroughly discussed by others; and, moreover, the time limitation here again confronts me. I must press on. Suffice it for me, as one of those then opposed in arms to Lee, however subordinate the capacity, to admit at once that, as a leader, he conducted operations on the highest plane. Whether acting on the defensive upon the soil of his native State, or leading his army into the enemy's country, he was humane, self-restrained and strictly observant of the most advanced rules of civilized warfare. He respected the non-combatant; nor did he ever permit the wanton destruction of private property. His famous Chambersburg order was a model which any invading general would do well to make his own; and I repeat now what I have heretofore had occasion to say, "I doubt if a hostile force of an equal size ever advanced into an enemy's country, or fell back from it in retreat, leaving behind less cause of hate and bitterness than did the

Army of Northern Virginia in that memorable campaign which culminated at Gettysburg."

And yet that Gettysburg campaign is an episode in Lee's military career which I am loth wholly to pass over; for the views I entertain of it are not in all respects those generally held. Studied in the light of results, that campaign has been criticised; the crucial attack of Gettysburg's third day has been pronounced a murderous persistence in a misconception; and, among Confederate writers especially, the effort has been to relieve Lee of responsibility for final miscarriage, transferring it to his lieutenants. As a result reached from participation in those events and subsequent study of them, briefly let me say I concur in none of these conclusions. Taking the necessary chances incident to all warfare on a large scale into consideration, the Gettysburg campaign was in my opinion timely, admirably designed, energetically executed, and brought to a close with consummate military skill. A well considered offensive thrust of the most deadly character, intelligently aimed at the opponent's heart, its failure was of the narrowest; and the disaster to the Confederate side which that failure might readily have involved was no less skilfully than successfully averted.

I cannot here and now enter into details. But I hold that credit, and the consequent

measure of applause, in the outcome of that campaign belong to Lee's opponent, and not to him. All the chances were in Lee's favor, and he should have won a great victory; and Meade should have sustained a decisive defeat. As it was, Meade triumphantly held his ground; Lee suffered a terrible repulse, his deadly thrust was foiled, and his campaign was a failure.

So far as Lee's general plan of campaign, and the movements which culminated in the battle of Gettysburg, were concerned, in war, be it always and ever remembered, a leader must take some chances, and mistakes will occur; but the mistakes are rarely, if ever, all on one side. They tend to counterbalance each other; and, commanders and commanded being at all equal, not unseldom it is the balance of misconceptions, shortcomings, miscarriages, and the generally unforeseen and indeed unforeseeable, which tips the scale to victory or defeat. I have said that I proposed to avoid comparisons; at best such are invidious, and, under present circumstances, might from me be considered as doubtful in matter of taste. I think, however, some things too obvious to admit of denial; or, consequently, to suggest comparison. About every crisp military aphorism is as matter of course attributed to Napoleon; and so Napoleon is

alleged first to have remarked that — “In war, men are nothing; a man is everything.” And, as formerly a soldier of the Army of the Potomac, I now stand appalled at the risk I unconsciously ran anterior to July, 1863, when confronting the Army of Northern Virginia, commanded as it then was and as we were. The situation was in fact as bad with us in the Army of the Potomac as it was with the Confederates in the Southwest. The unfortunate Pemberton there was simply not in the same class as Grant and Sherman, to whom he found himself opposed. Results there followed accordingly. So, in Virginia, Lee and Jackson made an extraordinary, a most exceptional combination. They outclassed McClellan and Burnside, Pope and Hooker; outclassed them sometimes terribly, sometimes ludicrously, always hopelessly: and results in that case also followed accordingly. That we were not utterly destroyed constitutes a flat and final refutation of the truth of Napoleon’s aphorism. If we did not realize the facts of the situation in this respect, our opponents did. Let me quote the words of one of them: “There was, however, one point of great interest in [the rapid succession of the Federal commanders], and that was our amazement that an army could maintain even so much as its organization under the

depressing strain of those successive appointments and removals of its commanding generals. And to-day (1903) I, for one, regard the fact that it did preserve its cohesion and its fighting power under, and in spite of such experiences, as furnishing impressive demonstration of the high character and intense loyalty of our historic foe, the Federal Army of the Potomac.”<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding the fact that until the death of Jackson and the Gettysburg campaign we were thus glaringly outclassed, and at a corresponding disadvantage in every respect save mere men and equipment, the one noticeable feature of the succession of Virginia campaigns from that of 1862 to that of 1864, was their obstinacy and indecisive character. The advantage would be sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other: but neither side could secure an indisputable supremacy. This was markedly the case at Gettysburg; and yet, judging by the Confederate accounts of that campaign which have met my eye, the inference would be that the Union forces labored under no serious disadvantage, while Lee's plans and tactics were continually compromised by untoward accident, or the precipitation or remissness of his subordinates. My study of what then

<sup>1</sup> Stiles, *Four Years under Marse Robert*, p. 21.



took place leads me to a wholly opposite conclusion. Well conceived and vigorously carried out as that campaign was on the part of the Confederate leader, the preponderance of the accidental — the blunders, the unforeseeable, the misconceptions and the miscarriages — was distinctly in Lee's favor. On any fair weighing of chances, he should have won a decisive victory; as a matter of actual outcome, he and his army ought to have been destroyed. As usual, on that theatre of war at the time, neither result came about.

First as to the chapter of accidents, — the misconceptions, miscarriages and shortcomings. If, as has been alleged, an essential portion of Lee's force was at one time out of reach and touch, and if, at the critical moment, a lieutenant was not promptly in place at a given hour, on the Union side an unforeseen change of supreme command went into effect when battle was already joined, and the newly appointed commander had no organized staff; his army was not concentrated; his strongest corps was over thirty miles from the point of conflict; and the two corps immediately engaged should have been destroyed in detail before reinforcements could have reached them. In addition to all this — superadded thereto — the most skilful general and perhaps the fiercest fighter on the Union side was

killed at the outset, and his line of battle was almost fatally disordered by the misconception of a corps commander.

The chapter of accidents thus reads all in Lee's favor. But, while Lee on any fair weighing of chances stands in my judgment more than justified both in his conception of the campaign and in every material strategic move made in it, he none the less fundamentally misconceived the situation, with consequences which should have been fatal both to him, and to his command. Frederick did the same at Kunersdorf; Napoleon, at Waterloo. In the first place, Lee had at that time supreme confidence in his command; and he had grounds for it. As he himself then wrote — "There never were such men in an army before. They will go anywhere and do anything, if properly led." And, for myself, I do not think the estimate thus expressed was exaggerated; speaking deliberately, having faced some portions of the Army of Northern Virginia at the time and having since reflected much on the occurrences of that momentous period, I do not believe that any more formidable or better organized and animated force was ever set in motion than that which Lee led across the Potomac in the early summer of 1863. It was essentially an army of fighters, — men

who, individually or in the mass, could be depended on for any feat of arms in the power of mere mortals to accomplish. They would blanch at no danger. This Lee from experience knew. He had tested them; they had full confidence in him. He also thought he knew his opponent; and here too his recent experience justified him.

The disasters which had befallen the Confederates in the Southwest in the spring and early summer of 1863 had to find compensation in the East. The exigencies of warfare necessitated it. Some risk must be incurred. So Lee determined to strike at his opponent's heart. He had what he believed to be the better weapon; and he had reason for considering himself incomparably the superior swordsman. He was; of that he had at Chancellorsville satisfied himself and the world. Then came the rapid, aggressive move; and the long, desperately contested struggle at Gettysburg, culminating in that historic charge of Pickett's Virginia division. Paradoxical as it may sound, in view of the result, that charge — what those men did — justified Lee. True, those who made the charge did not accomplish the impossible; but towards it they did all that mortal men could do. But it is urged that Lee should have recognized the impossible when face to face con-

fronted by it, and not have directed brave men to lay down their lives in the vain effort to do it. That is true; and, as Lee is said to have once remarked in another connection, "Even as poor a soldier as I am can generally discover mistakes after it is all over." After Gettysburg was over, like Frederick at Kunersdorf and Napoleon at Waterloo, Lee doubtless discovered his mistake. It was a very simple one: he undervalued his opponent. The temper of his own weapon he knew; he made no mistake there. His mistake lay in his estimate of his antagonist: but that estimate again was based on his own recent experience, though in other fields.

On the other hand, from the day I rode over the field of Gettysburg immediately following the fight, to that which now is, I have fully and most potently believed that only some disorganized fragments of Lee's army should after that battle have found their way back to Virginia. The war should have collapsed within sixty days thereafter. For eighteen hours after the repulse of Pickett's division, I have always felt and now feel, the fate of the Army of Virginia was as much in General Meade's hands as was the fate of the army led by Napoleon in the hands of Blücher on the night of Waterloo. As an aggressive force, the Confederate army was

fought out. It might yet put forth a fierce defensive effort; it was sure to die game: but it was impotent for attack. Meade had one entire corps — perhaps his best, — his Sixth, commanded by Sedgwick — intact and in reserve. It lay there cold, idle, formidable. The true counter movement for the fourth day of continuous fighting would on Meade's part have been an exact reversal of Lee's own plan of battle for the third day. That plan, as described by Fitzhugh Lee, was simple. "His [Lee's] purpose was to turn the enemy's left flank with his First Corps, and, after the work began there, to demonstrate against his lines with the others in order to prevent the threatened flank from being reinforced, these demonstrations to be converted into a real attack as the flanking wave of battle rolled over the troops in their front." What Lee thus proposed for Meade's army on the third day, Meade should unquestionably have returned on Lee's army upon the fourth day. Sedgwick's corps should then have assailed Lee's right and rear. I once asked a leading Confederate general, who had been in the very thick of it at Gettysburg, what would have been the outcome had Meade, within two hours of the repulse of Pickett, ordered Sedgwick to move off to the left, and, occupying Lee's line of retreat, proceeded to

envelop the Confederate right, while, early the following morning, Meade had commanded a general advance. The answer I received was immediate: "Without question we would have been destroyed. We all that night fully expected it; and could not understand next day why we were unmolested. My ammunition" — for he was an officer of artillery — "was exhausted."

But in all this, as in every speculation of the sort, — and the history of warfare is replete with them, — the "if" is much in evidence; as much in evidence, indeed, as it is in a certain familiar Shakesperian disquisition. I here introduce what I have said on this topic simply to illustrate what may be described as the balance of miscarriages inseparable from warfare. On the other hand, the manner in which Lee met disaster at Gettysburg, and the combination of serene courage, and consequent skill, with which he extricated his army from a most critical situation commands admiration. I would here say nothing depreciatory of General Meade. He was an accomplished officer as well as a brave soldier. Placed suddenly in a most trying position, — assigned to chief command when battle was already joined, — untried in his new sphere of action, and caught unprepared, — he fought at Gettysburg a stubborn,



gallant fight. With chances at the beginning heavily against him, he saved the day. Personally, I was later under deep obligation to General Meade. He too had character. None the less, as I have already pointed out, I fully believe that on the fourth day at Gettysburg Meade had but firmly to close his hand, and the Army of Northern Virginia was crushed. Perhaps under all the circumstances it was too much to have expected of him; certainly it was not done. Then Lee in turn did avail himself of his opportunity. Skilfully, proudly though sullenly, preserving an unbroken front, he withdrew to Virginia. That withdrawal was masterly.

Narrowly escaping destruction at Gettysburg, my next contention is that Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia never sustained defeat. Finally, it is true, succumbing to exhaustion, to the end they were not overthrown in fight. And here I approach a large topic, but one closely interwoven with Lee's military career; in fact, as I see it, the explanation of what finally occurred. What then was it that brought about the collapse of the Army of Northern Virginia, and the consequent downfall of the Confederacy? The literature of the War of Secession now constitutes a library in itself. Especially is this true of it in its military aspects. The shelves are crowded

with memoirs and biographies of its generals, the stories of its campaigns, the records and achievements of its armies, its army corps and its regiments. Yet I make bold to say that no well and philosophically considered narrative of the struggle has yet appeared; nor has any satisfactory or comprehensive explanation been given of its extraordinary and unanticipated outcome. Let me briefly set it forth as I see it; only by so doing can I explain what I mean.

Tersely put, dealing only with outlines, the southern community in 1861 precipitated a conflict on the slavery issue, in implicit reliance on its own warlike capacity and resources, the extent and very defensible character of its territory, and, above all, on its complete control of cotton as the great staple textile fabric of modern civilization. That the seceding States fully believed in the justice of their cause, and confidently appealed to it, I do not question, much less deny. For present purposes let this be conceded in full. But, historically, it is equally clear that to vindicate the right, next to their own manhood and determination, they relied in all possible confidence on their apparently absolute control of one commercial staple. When, therefore, in 1858, with the shadow of the impending conflict darkening the hori-

zon, a thoughtful senator from South Carolina, one on whom the mantle of Calhoun had fallen, declared that "Cotton *is* King," that "no power on earth dares to make war on it," that "without firing a gun, without drawing a sword," the cotton-producing South could, if war was declared upon it, bring "the whole world" to its feet, he only gave utterance to what was in the South accepted as a fundamental article of political and economical faith. Suggesting the contingency that no cotton was forthcoming from the South for a period of three years, the same senator declared, "this is certain: England would topple headlong and carry the whole civilized world with her, save the South. Who," he then exclaimed, "that has looked on recent events, can doubt that cotton is supreme." In case of conflict, cotton, if it went forth, was to supply the South with the sinews of warfare; if it did not go forth the lack of it would bring about European civil commotion, and compel foreign intervention. In either case the South was secure. As to a maritime blockade of the South, shutting it up to die of inanition, the idea was chimerical. No such feat of maritime force ever had been accomplished, it was claimed; nor was it possible of accomplishment. To "talk of putting up a wall of fire around eight hundred

and fifty thousand square miles" situated as the Confederacy was, with its twelve thousand miles of seacoast, was pronounced too "absurd" for serious discussion. And, certainly, that no such thing had ever yet been done was undeniable. But, even supposing it were possible of accomplishment, the doing it would but the more effectively play the Confederate game. It would compel intervention. As well shut off bread from the manufacturing centres of Europe as stop their supply of cotton. In any or either event, and in any contingency which might arise, the victory of the Confederacy was assured. And this theory of the situation and its outcome was accepted by the southern community as indisputable.

What occurred? In each case that which had been pronounced impossible of occurrence. On land the Confederacy had an ample force of men, they swarmed to the standards; and no better or more reliable material was ever gathered together. Well and skilfully marshalled, the Confederate soldier did on the march and in battle all that needed to be done. Nor were the two sides unequally matched so far as the land arrays were concerned. As Lee with his instinctive military sense put it even in the closing stages of the struggle — "The proportion of experienced troops is larger in our army than in that

of the enemy, while his numbers exceed our own." And in warfare experience, combined with an advantageous defensive, counts for a great deal. This was so throughout the conflict; and yet the Confederate cause sank in failure. It did so to the complete surprise of a bewildered world; for, in Europe, the ultimate success of the South was accepted as a foregone conclusion. To such an extent was this the case that the wisest and most far-seeing of English public men did not hesitate to stake their reputation for foresight upon it as a result. How was the wholly unexpected actual outcome brought about? The simple answer is, — The Confederacy collapsed from inanition. Suffering such occasional reverses and defeats as are incidental to all warfare, it was never crushed in battle or on the field, until its strength was sapped away by want of food. It died of exhaustion, — starved and gasping!

Take a living organism, whatever it may be, place it in a vessel hermetically sealed, and attach to that vessel an air pump. You know what follows. It is needless to describe it. No matter how strong or fierce or self-confident it may be, the victim dies; growing weaker by degrees, it finally collapses. That was the exact condition and fate of the Confederacy. What had been confidently pronounced im-

possible was done. The Confederacy was sealed up within itself by the blockade; and the complete exclusion of cotton from the manufacturing centres of Europe did not cause revolution there, nor compel intervention here. Man's foresight once more came to grief. As usual, it was the unexpected which occurred.

Thus the two decisive defeats of the Confederacy, — those which really brought about its downfall and compelled Lee to lay down his arms, — were inflicted not before Vicksburg nor yet in Virginia, — not in the field at all; they were sustained, the one, almost by default, on the ocean; the other, most fatal of all, after sharpest struggle in Lancashire. The story of that Lancashire Cotton Famine of 1861 to 1864 has never been adequately told in connection with our Civil War. Simply ignored by the standard historians, it was yet the Confederacy's fiercest fight, and its most decisive as well as most far-reaching defeat. A momentous conflict, the supremacy of the Union on the ocean hung on its issue; and upon that supremacy depended every considerable land operation: — the retention by the Confederacy of New Orleans, and the consequent control of the Mississippi; Sherman's march to the sea; the movement through the Carolinas; the operations before Petersburg; gen-



erally, the maintenance of the Confederate armies in the field. It is in fact no exaggeration to assert that both the conception and the carrying out of every large Union operation of the war without a single exception hinged and depended on complete national maritime supremacy. It is equally indisputable that the struggle in Lancashire was decisive of that supremacy. As Lee himself admitted in the death agony of the Confederacy, he had never believed it could in the long run make good its independence "unless Foreign Powers should, directly or indirectly, assist" it in so doing. Thus, strange as it sounds, it follows as a logical consequence that Lee and his Army of Northern Virginia were first reduced to inaction, and finally compelled to succumb, as the result of events on the other side of the Atlantic, largely stimulated by a moral impulse over which they could exert no control. The great and loudly trumpeted cotton campaign of the Confederacy was its most signal failure; and that failure was decisive of the war.

It is very curious, at times almost comical, to trace historical parallels. Plutarch is, of course, the standard exemplar of that sort of treatment. Among other great careers, Plutarch, as every college boy knows, tells the story of King Pyrrhus, the Epirot. A great captain, Pyrrhus devised a military formation

which his opponents could not successfully face, and his career was consequently one of victory. But at last he met his fate. Assaulting the town of Argos, he became entangled in its streets; and, fighting his way out, he was struck down, and killed, by a tile thrown from a house-top by an Argive woman. The Confederacy, and, through the Confederacy, Lee underwent a not dissimilar fate; for, as an historical fact, it was a missile from a woman's hand which was decisive of that Lancashire conflict, and so doomed the Confederacy. A startling proposition; but proof quite irrefutable of it exists in a publication to which as an authority no Southern writer at least will take exception, the organ established in London by the agents of the Confederacy in 1862. Sustained as long as the conflict continued from Confederate funds, with a view to influencing European public opinion, the *Index*, as it was called, collapsed with the Confederacy in July, 1865. Naturally those in charge of it watched with feverish interest the progress of the cotton famine. Not only was the British pocket nerve touched at its most sensitive point, but in Lancashire starvation emphasized financial distress. The pressure thus brought to bear on public opinion in Great Britain, and, through that public opinion, on the policy of Europe, was confidently counted

on for results decisive of the American struggle. Ten years before Harriet Beecher Stowe had launched through the press her Uncle Tom's Cabin. Translated into every civilized tongue, it had soon become world literature. In Great Britain, and especially in Lancashire, it "carried the new gospel to every cabin in the land." Whoever in those days read anything, read Uncle Tom's Cabin. That it was a correct portrayal of conditions actually existing in the region wherein the incidents narrated were supposed to have occurred, is not now to be considered. That Uncle Tom himself was a type of his race, or indeed even a possibility in it, few would now be disposed to contend.<sup>1</sup> Ethically, he was a Christian martyr of the most advanced description and, on the large class who accepted the work as a correct portrayal, the pathetic story and cruel fate of the colored saint, moralist and philosopher made an indelible impression. Indeed, that female and sentimentalist portrayal lent a force which has not yet spent itself to the contention that the only difference between the Ethiopian and the Caucasian is

<sup>1</sup> J. C. Read, *The Brothers' War*, pp. 194-198. There is in Mr. Read's book, published fifty years after the appearance of Mrs. Stowe's historic tale and forty years after the Proclamation of Emancipation, a chapter (ix) entitled, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," in which are to be found the views of an observant and reflecting Georgian on the statement in the text.

epidermal; the negro being in fact merely a white man — a Yankee, if you please — who, having a black skin, has never been given a chance! Nay, more! if Uncle Tom and Legree were to be accepted as types, the black man was superior naturally to the white; for Uncle Tom was a fully developed moralist, while Legree was a demon incarnate. And this presentation of life and manners, and this portrayal of typical racial characters were in Lancashire implicitly accepted as gospel truth! Such indisputably was the fact; and, when the final issue was joined, the fact told heavily against the Confederacy. In contemplation of it, — realizing the handicap thus imposed, the burden of which at the moment the historian has since ignored, and few consequently now appreciate, — the writers for the Index fairly cried aloud in agony. Their wail, long repeated, has in it as now read an element of the comic. The patience of the victims of the cotton famine, they declared, was the extraordinary feature of the foreign situation; and the agents of the Confederacy noted with unconcealed dismay the absence of political demonstrations calculated to urge on a not unwilling Palmerston ministry “its duty to its suffering subjects.” There was but one way of accounting for it. Uncle Tom and Legree were respectively doing their work. So

it was that the Index despairingly at last declared — “The emancipation of the negro from the slavery of Mrs. Beecher Stowe’s heroes is the one idea of the millions of British who know no better, and do not care to know.” Like the Cherubim with the flaming sword this sentiment stood between Lancashire and cotton; and the inviolate blockade made possible the subjugation of the Confederacy. With Pyrrhus, it was the tile thrown by a woman from the house-top; with Lee, it was a book by a woman issued from the printing press! The missiles were equally fatal. It was only a difference of time, and its changed conditions.

Foreign intervention being thus withheld, and the control of the sea by the Union made absolute, the blockade was gradually perfected. The fateful process then went steadily on. Armies might be resisted in the field; the working of the air pump could not be stopped; and, day and night, season after season, the air pump worked. So the atmosphere of the Confederacy became more and more attenuated, respiration sensibly harder. Air-hole on air-hole was closed. First New Orleans fell; then Vicksburg, and the Mississippi flowed free; next Sherman, securely counting on the control of the sea as a base of new operations on land, penetrated the vitals of the Confeder-

*c. f.*  
*Adams*  
*Civil War*  
*Cause.*  
*Uncle*  
*Tom's*  
*Cabin.*

acy; then, relying still on maritime coöperation, he pursued his almost unopposed way through the Carolinas; while Grant, with his base secure upon the James and Fortress Monroe, beleaguered Richmond. Lee with his Army of Northern Virginia calmly, but watchfully and resolutely, confronted him. The Confederate lines were long and thin, guarded by poorly clad and half-fed men. But, veterans, they held their assailants firmly at bay. As Lee, however, fully realized, it was only a question of time. The working of the air pump was beyond his sphere either of influence or operations. Nothing could stop it.

As early as the close of 1863 Lee wrote of his men, "Thousands are bare-footed, a greater number partially shod, and nearly all without overcoats, blankets, or warm clothing;" and later, in the dead of winter, referring to the elementary necessities of any successful warfare, he said, — "The supply, by running the blockade, has become so precarious that I think we should turn our attention to our own resources . . . as a further dependence upon those from abroad can result in nothing but increase of suffering and want." The conclusion here drawn, while necessary, was extremely suggestive. "Our own resources!" — the Confederacy had always prided itself on being a purely agricultural community.



With institutions patriarchal in character, it had looked upon the people of the North as its agents and factors, and those of Europe as its skilled workmen and artisans; and now that community shut up within its own limits, under conditions of warfare active and severe, had only itself to rely upon for a supply of everything its defenders needed, from munitions to shoes, from blankets to medicines and even soap. Viewed in a half century's perspective, the situation was simply and manifestly impossible of continuance. To it there could be but one outcome; and when at last on the 16th of January, 1865, the telegraph announced the fall of Fort Fisher, the Confederacy felt itself hermetically sealed. Wilmington, its last breathing hole, was closed. Still, not the less for that, the air pump kept on in its deadly silent work.

Three months later the long-delayed inevitable occurred. The collapse came. That under such conditions it should have been so long in coming is now the only legitimate cause of surprise. That adversity is the test of man is a commonplace; that Lee and his Army of Northern Virginia were during the long, dragging winter of 1864-5 most direfully subjected to that test need not here be said; any more than it is needful to say that they bore the test manfully. But the handwriting

was on the wall; the men were taxed beyond the limits of human endurance. And Lee knew it. "Yesterday, the most inclement day of the winter," he reported on February 8, 1865, the right wing of his army "had to be retained in line of battle, having been in the same condition the two previous days and nights. . . . Under these circumstances, heightened by assaults and fire of the enemy, some of the men had been without meat for three days, and all were suffering from reduced rations and scant clothing, exposed to battle, cold, hail and sleet. . . . The physical strength of the men, if their courage survives, must fail under this treatment." If it was so with the men, with the animals it was even worse. "Our cavalry," he added, "has to be dispersed for want of forage." Even thus Lee's army faced an opponent vastly superior in numbers, whose ranks were being constantly replenished; a force armed, clothed, equipped, fed and sheltered as no similar force in the world's history had ever been before. I state only indisputable facts. Lee proved equal to even this occasion. Bearing a bold, confident front, he was serene and outwardly calm; alert, resourceful, formidable to the last, individually he showed no sign of weakness, not even occasional petulance. Inspired by his example, the whole South seemed

to lean up against him in implicit, loving reliance. It was a superlative tribute to Character. Finally, when in April the summons to conflict came, the Army of Northern Virginia, the single remaining considerable organized force of the Confederacy, seemed to stagger to its feet, and, gaunt and grim, shivering with cold and emaciated with hunger, worn down by hard, unceasing attrition, it faced its enemy, formidable still. As I have since studied that situation, listened to the accounts of Confederate officers active in the closing movements, and read the letters written me by those of the rank and file, it has seemed as if Lee's command then cohered and moved by mere force of habit. Those composing it failed to realize the utter hopelessness of the situation — the disparity of the conflict. I am sure Jefferson Davis failed to realize it; so, I think, in less degree, did Lee. They talked, for instance, of recruits and of a levy in mass; Lee counselled the arming of the slaves; and when, after Lee had surrendered, Davis on the 10th of April, 1865, held his last war conference at Greensboro, he was still confident he would in a few weeks have another army in the field, and did not hesitate to express his faith that "we can whip the enemy yet, if our people will turn out." I have often pondered over

what Davis had in mind when he ventured this opinion; or what led Lee to advocate the enlistment of negroes. Both were soldiers; and, besides being great in his profession, Lee was more familiar than any other man alive with actual conditions then existing in the Confederate camps. Both Davis and Lee, therefore, must have known that, in those final stages of the conflict, if the stamp of a foot upon the ground would have brought a million men into the field, the cause of the Confederacy would thereby have been in no wise strengthened; on the contrary, what was already bad would have been made much worse. For, to be effective in warfare, men must be fed and clothed and armed. Organized in commands, they must have rations as well as ammunition, commissary and quartermaster trains, artillery horses and forage. In the closing months of the Civil War, both Lee and Davis knew perfectly well that they could not arm, nor feed, nor clothe, nor transport the forces already in the field; they were themselves without money, and the soldiers most inadequately supplied with arms, clothing, quartermaster or medical supplies, commissariat or ammunition. Notoriously, those then on the muster-rolls were going home, or deserting to the enemy, as the one alternative to death from privation — hunger

and cold. If then, a million, or even only a poor hundred thousand fresh recruits had in answer to the summons swarmed to the lines around Richmond, how would it have bettered the situation? An organized army is a mighty consumer of food and material; and food and material have to be served out to it every day. It must be fed as regularly as the sun rises and sets. And the organized resources of the Confederacy were exhausted; its granaries — Georgia and the valley of the Shenandoah — were notoriously devastated and desolate; its lines of communication and supply were cut, or in the hands of the invader.

Realizing this, when the time was ripe, Lee rose to the full height of the great occasion. The value of Character made itself felt. The service Lee now rendered to the common country, the obligation under which he placed us whether of the North or South, has not, I think, been always appreciated; and to overstate it would be difficult. Again to put on record my estimate of it brings me here to-day.

That the situation was to the last degree critical is matter of history. Further organized resistance on the part of the Confederacy was impossible. The means for it did not exist; could not be had. Cut off completely from the outer world, the South was consuming itself, — feeding on its own vitals.

The single alternative to surrender was disbandment and irregular warfare. As General Johnston afterwards wrote, "without the means of purchasing supplies of any kind, or procuring or repairing arms, we could continue the war only as robbers or guerrillas." But that it should be so continued was wholly possible; nay more, it was in the line of precedent, — it had been done before, and, more than once, it has since been done, notably in South Africa. It was, moreover, the course advocated by many southern participants in the struggle as that proper to be pursued; and that it would be pursued was accepted as of course by all foreign observers, and by the organ of the Confederacy in London. "A strenuous resistance and not surrender," it was there declared, "was the unalterable determination of the Confederate authorities." Lee's own son, then in the Army of Northern Virginia, but by chance not included in the surrender, has since described how surprised and incredulous he was when news of it first reached him; and, "not believing for an instant that our struggle was over," he made his way at once to Jefferson Davis, at Greensboro. At the time of his capture Davis himself, wholly unsubdued in spirit, was moving in the direction of the Mississippi intent on organizing resistance in



Texas, — a resistance which the writers of the Index confidently predicted would “be fierce, ferocious and of long duration,” — “a successful or at least a protracted resistance.”

Indeed, had the veil over the immediate future then been lifted, and the outrages, and humiliations worse than outrage, of the period of so-called reconstruction, but actual servile domination, now to ensue revealed itself, no room for doubt exists that the dread alternative would have been adopted. Even as it was, the scales hung trembling. Anything or everything was possible; even that mad pistol shot of the theatrical fool which five days later so irretrievably complicated a delicate and dangerous situation. None the less, what Lee and Grant had done at Appomattox on April 9 could not be wholly undone even by the deed in Ford's theatre of April 14; much had been secured. Of Appomattox, and what there occurred, I do not care here to speak. I feel I could not speak adequately, or in words sufficiently simple; for, in my judgment, there is not in our whole history as a people any incident so creditable to our manhood, — so indicative of our racial possession of Character. Marked throughout by a straightforward dignity of personal bearing and propriety in action, it was marred by no touch of the theatrical,

no effort at posturing. I know not to which of the two leaders, there face to face, preference should be given. They were thoroughly typical, the one of Illinois and the New West, the other of Virginia and the Old Dominion. Grant was considerate and magnanimous, — restrained in victory; Lee, dignified in defeat, carried himself with that sense of absolute fitness which compelled respect. Verily! — “he that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city”!

The lead that day given by Lee proved decisive of the course to be pursued by his fellows with arms in their hands. At first, and for a brief space, there was in the Confederate councils much diversity of opinion as to what should or could be done. Calm and dignified in presence of overwhelming disaster, the voice of Jefferson Davis was that of Milton's “scepter'd king:” — “My sentence is for open war!” Lee was not there; none the less, Lee, absent, prevailed over Davis. The sober second thought satisfied all but the most extreme that what he had done they best might do. Thus the die was cast. And now, forty years and more after the event, it is appalling to reflect what in all human probability would have resulted had the choice then been other than it was, — had Lee's personality and character not intervened.

The struggle had lasted four full years; the assassination of Lincoln was as oil on the Union fire. With a million men, inured to war, on the national muster rolls, men impatient of further resistance, accustomed to license and now educated up to a belief that war was Hell, and that the best way to bring it to a close was to intensify Hell, — with such a force as this to reckon with, made more reckless in brutality by the assassin's senseless shot, the Confederacy need have looked for no consideration, no mercy. Visited by the besom of destruction, it would have been harried out of existence. Fire and sword sweeping over it, what the sword spared the fire would have consumed. Whether such an outcome of a prolonged conflict — what was recently witnessed in South Africa — would in its result have been more morally injurious to the North than it would have been physically destructive to the South, is not now to be considered. It would, however, assuredly have come about.

From that crown of sorrows Lee saved the common country. He was the one man in the Confederacy who could exercise decisive influence. It was the night of the 8th of April, lacking ten days only of exactly four full years, — years very full for us who lived through them — since that not dissimilar night when

Lee had paced the floor at Arlington, communing with himself over the fateful issue, a decision on which was then forced upon him. A decision of even greater import was now to be reached, and reached by him. A commander of the usual cast would under such circumstances have sought advice — perhaps support; at least, a divided responsibility. Even though himself by nature and habit a masterful man and one accustomed to direct, he would have called a council, and harkened to those composing it. This Lee did not do. A singularly self-poised man, he sought no external aid. Sitting before his bivouac fire at Appomattox he reviewed the situation. Doing so, as before at Arlington, he reached his own conclusion. That conclusion he himself at the time expressed in words, brief, indeed, but vibrating with moral triumph:— “The question is, is it right to surrender this army? If it is right, then I will take all the responsibility.” The conclusion reached at Arlington in the April night of 1861 to some seems to have been wrong — inexcusable even; all concur in that reached before the Appomattox camp-fire in the April vigils of 1865. He then a second time decided; and he decided right.

His work was done; but from failure he plucked triumph. Thenceforth Lee wore

defeat as 't were a laurel crown. A few days later a small group of horsemen appeared in the morning hours on the further side of the Richmond pontoons across the James. By some strange intuition it became known that General Lee was of the party; and, silent and uncovered, a crowd — Virginians all — gathered along the route the horsemen would take. "There was no excitement, no hurraing; but as the great chief passed, a deep, loving murmur, greater than these, rose from the very hearts of the crowd. Taking off his hat, and simply bowing his head, the man great in adversity passed silently to his own door; it closed upon him; and his people had seen him for the last time in his battle harness."

From the day that he affixed his signature to the terms of surrender submitted to him by Grant at Appomattox to the day when he drew a dying breath at Lexington, Lee's subsequent course was consistent. In his case there was no vacillation, no regretful glances backward thrown. When, four months after the last hostile shot was fired, he was invited to assume the presidency of this college, though then under indictment, in flagrant disregard of the immunity assured him when he gave his parole, he briefly set forth his views. "I think it," he wrote, "the duty of every citizen, in the



present condition of the country, to do all in his power to aid in the restoration of peace and harmony, and in no way to oppose the policy of the State or General Governments directed to that object." And, four days later, writing to the Confederate Governor of Virginia, he said — "The duty of [Virginian] citizens appears to me too plain to admit of doubt. All should unite in honest efforts to obliterate the effects of war, and to restore the blessings of peace. They should remain if possible in the country; promote harmony and good feeling; qualify themselves to vote, and elect to the State and general legislatures wise and patriotic men, who will devote their abilities to the healing of all dissensions. I have," he added, "invariably recommended this course since the cessation of hostilities, and have endeavored to practice it myself." Here was a complete exposition of duty, combined with abnegation of self; the purest patriotism, it was also the concentrated essence of statesmanship. He counselled with a wisdom not less profound because unconscious; and what he said evinced that underlying common sense which in politics avails more than genius.

Five years of life and active usefulness yet remained to General Lee — years in my judgment most creditable to himself, the most useful to his country of his whole life; for, during



them, he set to Virginia and his own people a high example, — an example of lofty character and simple bearing. Uttering no complaints, entering into no controversies, he was as one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing. His blood and judgment were well commingled; and so it fell out that he accepted fortune's buffets and rewards with equal thanks. His record and appearance during those final years are pleasant to dwell upon, for they reflect honor on our American manhood. Turning his face courageously to the future, he uttered no word of repining over the past. Yet, like the noble Moor, his occupation also was gone —

“The royal banner, and all quality,  
Pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war!”

But with Lee this did not imply

“Farewell the tranquil mind! farewell content!”

Far from it; for as the gates closed on the old occupation, they opened on a new. And it was an occupation through which he gave to his country, North and South, a priceless gift.

Speaking advisedly and on full reflection, I say that of all the great characters of the Civil War, and it was productive of many whose names and deeds posterity will long bear in recollection, there was not one who passed away in the serene atmosphere and with the

gracious bearing of Lee. From beginning to end those parting years of his will bear closest scrutiny. There was about them nothing venal, nothing querulous, nothing in any way sordid or disappointing. In his case there was no anti-climax; for those closing years were dignified, patient, useful; sweet in domesticity, they in all things commanded respect. It is pleasant to catch glimpses of the erstwhile commander in that quiet Virginia life. There is in the picture something altogether human—intensely sympathetic. “Traveller,” he would write, “is my only companion; I may also say my pleasure. He and I, whenever practicable, wander out in the mountains and enjoy sweet confidence.” Or again we see him, always with Traveller, the famous old charger this time “stepping very proudly,” as his rider showed those two little sunbonneted daughters of a professor, astride of a plodding old horse, over a pleasant road, quite unknown to them. Once more in imagination we may ride, his companions, through those mountain roads of his dearly loved Virginia, or seek shelter with him and his daughter from a thunder-shower in the log cabin, the inmates of which are stunned when too late they realize that the courtly, gracious intruder was no other than the idolized General Lee. Indifferent to wealth, he was scrupulous as

respects those money dealings a carelessness in regard to which has embittered the lives of so many of our public men, as not infrequently it has tarnished their fame. Lee's career will be scrutinized in vain for a suggestion even of the sordid, or of an obligation he failed to meet. He was nothing if not self-respecting. He once wrote to a member of his family "'vile dross' has never been a drug with me," yet his generosity as a giver from his narrow means was limited only by his resources. Restricting his own wants to necessities, he contributed, to an extent which excites surprise, to both public calls and private needs. But the most priceless of those contributions were contained in the precepts he inculcated and in the unconscious example he set during those closing years.

Lee was at the head of Washington College from October, 1865, to October, 1870; a very insufficient time in which to accomplish any considerable work. A man of fast advancing years, he also then had sufficient cause to feel a sense of lassitude. He showed no signs of it. On the contrary, closely studied, those years, and Lee's bearing in them, were in certain respects the most remarkable as well as the most creditable of his life; they impressed unmistakably upon it the stamp of true greatness. Unable to pass them wholly over, I shall

deal very briefly with them. His own means of subsistence having been swept away by war, — the property of his wife as well as his own having been sequestered and confiscated in utter disregard not only of law, but — I add it regretfully — of decency, — a mere pittance, designated in courtesy “salary,” under his prudent management was made to suffice for the needs of an establishment the quiet dignity of which even exceeded its severe simplicity. Within five months of the downfall of the Confederacy, he addressed himself to his new vocation. Coming to it from crushing defeat, about him there was nothing suggestive of disappointment; and thereafter through public trials and private misfortunes — for it pleased Heaven to try him with afflictions — he bore himself with serene patience, and a mingled firmness and sweetness of temper to which mere words fail to do justice. More than that, becoming interested in his new work, he evinced, it would seem, as the head of a college a grasp of educational problems not less clear and intelligent than he had previously shown of strategic conditions. It was indeed extraordinary that a man educated in a military school, first an engineer, then an officer of cavalry, and finally a general in charge of large field operations, should, when approaching his sixtieth year, have

given proof of such mental activity and freshness. Fully realizing the needs and requirements of the present age, the former commandant of West Point was the ardent advocate of complete classical and literary culture. Utterly out of sympathy with the modern advocates of materialistic education, he yet recognized the fact that material well-being is, for a people, the condition of all high civilization; and, accordingly, sought to provide, in the institution of which he was the head, all means for the development of science, and its practical application. With a large and correct conception he planned, therefore, to connect all the departments of literary, scientific, and professional education, and to consolidate them under a common organization. He thus outlined a true university. So, at an early day he called into existence, as adjuncts of the college he found prostrate and well-nigh moribund, schools of Applied Mathematics, of Engineering and of Law; while later he submitted to its Board of Trustees a matured scheme for the complete development of the scientific and professional departments. His death, just before he had yet reached the grand climacteric, prevented the full development of his great conception. None the less, he had shown himself fully equal to the new demand upon him.

The most marked feature of his educational career was, however, the moral influence he exerted on the student body, — what has most fitly been described by one associated with him as “the mighty influence of his personal character.” Here, as in the Army of Northern Virginia, this was all-powerful. It was sorely needed, too; for the young men of the South were wild, and resented efforts at restraint. Grown up in an environment of warfare and consequent violence, they were somewhat disposed to take matters into their own hands, — to be, in a word, a law unto themselves; but, under Lee’s presidency, the elevation of tone in this respect, and the consequent improvement in student conduct were, we are on good evidence assured, marked and rapid. Acts of disorder became infrequent; and in the latter years of Lee’s brief administration it is said that “hardly a single case of serious discipline occurred.” A Boston student of Washington College in those years — sent there because of the feelings of profound respect for Lee entertained by his Northern father — has since borne witness to me of the personal interest taken by Washington’s president in the individual students. In close sympathy with the modern university spirit, the youth in question was, I have reason to suppose, far more addicted to athletics than to his text-books.



“This lack of proficiency in my studies,” he has recently written me, “was, of course, a matter for which I was frequently called into the presence of General Lee; and I fully appreciate now, though I did not then, the difficulties under which he labored; for, if he had expelled me, as under similar circumstances he undoubtedly would have expelled any Southern student, it would have been considered a factional matter. He would plead most earnestly with me always that I should attend more to my studies and less to athletics, and never a harsh word during the entire period.”

It remains to assign due weight and value to these precepts and this great example at just that juncture and from just that man. And here, bearing in mind the common country, — the community to which I belong as well as that I now address, — I feel I tread on dangerous ground. What I must necessarily say will be very susceptible of misconstruction. Speaking, however, in the true historical spirit, as throughout I have sought to do, I must deal with this topic also as best I can.

Because no blood flowed on the scaffold, and no confiscations of houses or lands marked the close of our war of Secession, it has always been assumed by us of the victorious party that extreme, indeed unprece-

dented, clemency was shown to the vanquished, and that subsequently they had no good ground of complaint or sufficient cause for restiveness. That history will accord assent to this somewhat self-complacent conviction is open to question. On the contrary, it may not unfairly be doubted whether a people prostrate after civil strife has often received severer measure than was inflicted on the so-called reconstructed Confederate States during the years immediately succeeding the close of strife. Adam Smith somewhere defined Rebels and Heretics as "those unlucky persons who, when things have come to a certain degree of violence, have the misfortune to be of the weaker party." Spoliation and physical suffering have immemorially been their lot. The Confederate, it is true, when he ceased to resist, escaped this visitation in its usual and time-approved form. Nevertheless, he was by no means exempt from it. In the matter of confiscation, it has been computed that the freeing of the slaves by act of war swept out of existence property valued at some two thousand millions; while, over and above this, a system of simultaneous reconstruction subjected the disfranchised master to the rule of the enfranchised bondsman. For a community conspicuously masterful, and notoriously

quick to resent affront, to be thus placed by alien force under the civil rule of those of a different and distinctly inferior race, only lately their property, is not physical torment, it is true, but that it is mild or considerate treatment can hardly be contended. Yet this — slave confiscation, and reconstruction under African rule — was the war penalty imposed on the States of the Confederacy. That the policy inspired at the time a feeling of bitter resentment in the South was no cause for wonder. Upon it time has already recorded a verdict. Following the high precedent set at Appomattox it was distinctly unworthy. Conceived in passion, it ignored both science and the philosophy of statesmanship; worse yet, it was ungenerous. Lee, for instance, again setting the example, applied formally for amnesty and a restoration of civil rights within two months of his surrender. His application was silently ignored; while he died “a prisoner on parole,” the suffrage denied him was conferred on his manumitted slaves. Verily, it was not alone the base Indian of the olden time who “threw a pearl away richer than all his tribe”!

But on such a rejection and choice of material as this was the so-called reconstruction edifice based; nor is it matter for wonder that it speedily crumbled away. It was under

these conditions that Lee's bearing and example were of special national importance. The one political result the States of the Confederacy should ever have kept steadily in view after strife closed was the restoration of local self-government; and that, under the traditions and political instincts of the American community, was sure to come. It was only a question of time; and patience and self-restraint were the two qualities most sure to hasten the steps of time. "We shall have to be patient," Lee in March, 1866, wrote to old companions in arms, "and suffer for a while at least; . . . I hope, in time, peace will be restored to the country, and that the South may enjoy some measure of prosperity. I fear, however, much suffering is still in store for her, and that her people must be prepared to exercise fortitude and forbearance." To those to whom it was addressed, no wiser or more tactful counsel could at that juncture (March, 1866) have been imparted; for, while Lee himself possessed those virtues to a well-nigh unexampled degree, patience and self-restraint have not been generally accepted as most conspicuous among the many manly and ennobling qualities of the race to which Lee belonged.

In the passage with which I began, it was observed by Emerson that "Character de-

notes habitual self-possession, habitual regard to interior and constitutional motives, a balance not to be upset or easily disturbed by outward events and opinion." To my knowledge I never saw General Lee; I certainly never stood in his presence, nor exchanged a word with him. On the few occasions when I was a guest in his house, he chanced to be absent. Even that was long ago; while he and his family still lived at Arlington. Thus I know him only by report, and through his letters. But, if the report of those who did know him well, and the evidence of what he wrote, may be relied on, "habitual self-possession, habitual regard to interior and constitutional motives, a balance not to be upset or easily disturbed by outward events and opinion," were his to an eminent degree, — a degree which his harshest and most prejudiced critic could not ignore. That, himself a devout man and by conviction sincerely religious, he was neither ashamed nor afraid so publicly to profess himself, may be read in his repeated army orders; or, to such as prefer there to look for it, in his family letters. What more expressive of a profound religious faith could be imagined than these words written in the very shadow of Gettysburg's disaster to the dying wife of his wounded and captured son?

—“In his own good time He will relieve us, and make all things work together for our good, if we give Him our love and place in Him our trust.” That his immediate family circle regarded him with the affectionate devotion founded on respect which is the surest indication of those sterling and fundamental qualities which alone can cause a man to seem a hero to those near to him, — the confidants of his privacy, — appears from those family letters and recollections which have been so freely published. That he impressed himself on those about him in his professional and public life to an uncommon extent, — that the soldiers of the Army of Northern Virginia as well as those of his staff and in high command felt not only implicit and unquestioning confidence in him but to him a strong personal affection, is established by their concurrent testimony. He, too, might well have said with Brutus: —

“My heart doth joy that yet in all my life  
I found no man but he was true to me.  
I shall have glory by this losing day.”

Finally, one who knew him well has written of him — “He had the quiet bearing of a powerful yet harmonious nature. An unruffled calm upon his countenance betokened the concentration and control of the whole being within. He was a kingly man whom



all men who came into his presence expected to obey." That he was gifted in a prominent degree with the *mens aequa in arduis* of the Roman poet, none deny.

And now, Virginians, a word with you in closing: "Show me the man you honor; I know by that symptom, better than by any other, what kind of man you yourself are. For you show me then what your ideal of manhood is; what kind of man you long possibly to be, and would thank the Gods, with your whole soul, for being if you could. Whom shall we consecrate and set apart as one of our sacred men? Sacred; that all men may see him, be reminded of him, and, by new example added to old perpetual precept, be taught what is real worth in man. Whom do you wish to resemble? Him you set on a high column, that all men looking at it, may be continually apprised of the duty you expect from them."

"The virtues of a superior man are like the wind; the virtues of a common man are like the grass; the grass, when the wind passes over it, bends."



## APPENDIX

(Page 10)

IN regard to the early utterances of Mr. Webster, the following is from a speech by him in the National House of Representatives, December 9, 1814. It should be borne in mind that this speech was delivered in the midst of the gloomiest period of the War of 1812-15, four months after the battle of Bladensburg and the capture of Washington, and one month before the British were defeated below New Orleans. The speech was first published (1902) by C. H. Van Tyne, in his edition of the Letters of Daniel Webster (p. 67).

“In my opinion [the law under consideration for compulsory army and military service] ought not to be carried into effect. The operation of measures thus unconstitutional and illegal ought to be prevented, by a resort to other measures which are both constitutional and legal. It will be the solemn duty of the State Governments to protect their own authority over their own Militia, and to interpose between their citizens and arbitrary power. These are among the objects for which the State Governments exist; and their highest obligations bind them to the preservation of their own rights and the liberties of their people. I express these sentiments here, Sir, because I shall express them to my constituents. Both they and myself live under a Constitution which teaches us, that ‘the doctrine of non-resistance against arbitrary power and oppression is absurd, slavish, and destructive of the good and

happiness of mankind.' With the same earnestness with which I now exhort you to forbear from these measures, I shall exhort them to exercise their unquestionable right of providing for the security of their own liberties."

William Rawle was in his day an eminent Philadelphia lawyer, and Chancellor of the Law Association of Philadelphia. The principal author of the revised code of Pennsylvania, he stood in the foremost rank of American legal luminaries in the first third of the nineteenth century. His instincts, sympathies, and connections were all national. His *View of the Constitution*, published in Philadelphia in 1825, was the standard text-book on the subject until the publication of *Story's Commentaries*, in 1833. It has been asserted that Rawle's *View* was used as a text-book for the instruction of the students at West Point until after the year 1840. (See prefatory matter to republication of paper entitled *Sectional Misunderstandings*, by Robert Bingham, in *North American Review* of September, 1904.)

"If a faction should attempt to subvert the government of a State for the purpose of destroying its republican form, the paternal power of the Union could thus be called forth to subdue it. Yet it is not to be understood that its interposition would be justifiable if the people of a State should determine to retire from the Union, whether they adopted another or retained the same form of government. (Page 289.) . . .

"The States, then, may wholly withdraw from the Union; but while they continue they must retain the character of representative republics." (Page 290.)

"The secession of a State from the Union depends

on the will of the people of such State. The people alone, as we have already seen, hold the power to alter their constitution. The Constitution of the United States is, to a certain extent, incorporated into the constitutions of the several States by the act of the people. The State legislatures have only to perform certain organical operations in respect to it. To withdraw from the Union comes not within the general scope of their delegated authority. There must be an express provision to that effect inserted in the State constitutions. This is not at present the case with any of them, and it would perhaps be impolitic to confide it to them. A matter so momentous ought not to be entrusted to those who would have it in their power to exercise it lightly and precipitately upon sudden dissatisfaction, or causeless jealousy, perhaps against the interests and the wishes of a majority of their constituents.

“But in any manner by which a secession is to take place, nothing is more certain than that the act should be deliberate, clear, and unequivocal. The perspicuity and solemnity of the original obligation require correspondent qualities in its dissolution. The powers of the general government cannot be defeated or impaired by an ambiguous or implied secession on the part of the State, although a secession may perhaps be conditional. The people of the State may have some reasons to complain in respect to acts of the general government; they may in such cases invest some of their own officers with the power of negotiation, and may declare an absolute secession in case of their failure. Still, however, the secession must in such case be distinctly and peremptorily declared to take place on that event; and in such case, as in the case of an unconditional secession, the previous ligament with the

Union would be legitimately and fairly destroyed. But in either case the people is the only moving power." (Pages 295, 296.)

De Tocqueville cannot, of course, be cited as an authority on American Constitutional Law. Nevertheless, an acute observer, his evidence carries great weight on the question of the views generally current on all constitutional questions at the time he collected the materials for his great work (1831-32). The following extracts bearing upon the topic under discussion are found in the translation of *Democracy in America* by Henry Reeve (London, 1889).

"In America, each State has fewer opportunities of resistance and fewer temptations to non-compliance; nor can such a design be put in execution (if indeed it be entertained) without an open violation of the laws of the Union, a direct interruption of the ordinary course of justice, and a bold declaration of revolt; in a word, without taking a decisive step which men hesitate to adopt." . . . "Here the term Federal government is clearly no longer applicable to a state of things which must be styled an incomplete national government: a form of government has been found out which is neither exactly national nor federal; but no further progress has been made, and the new word which will one day designate this novel invention does not yet exist." (Vol. i, pp. 156, 157.)

"The Union is a vast body which presents no definite object to patriotic feeling. The forms and limits of the State are distinct and circumscribed; since it represents a certain number of objects which are familiar to the citizens and beloved by all. It is identified with the very soil, with the right of property and the do-



mestic affections, with the recollections of the past, the labours of the present, and the hopes of the future. Patriotism, then, which is frequently a mere extension of individual egotism, is still directed to the State, and is not excited by the Union." (Vol. i, p. 394.)

"The Federal Government is, therefore, notwithstanding the precautions of those who founded it, naturally so weak that it more peculiarly requires the free consent of the governed to enable it to subsist.

"If the Union were to undertake to enforce the allegiance of the Confederate States by military means, it would be in a position very analogous to that of England at the time of the War of Independence." (Vol. i, p. 395.)

"The Union was formed by the voluntary agreement of the States; and, in uniting together, they have not forfeited their nationality, nor have they been reduced to the condition of one and the same people. If one of the States chose to withdraw its name from the contract, it would be difficult to disprove its right of doing so; and the Federal Government would have no means of maintaining its claims directly, either by force or by right." (Vol. i, p. 396.)

"It appears to me unquestionable that if any portion of the Union seriously desired to separate itself from the other States, they would not be able, nor indeed would they attempt, to prevent it; and that the present Union will only last as long as the States which compose it choose to continue members of the confederation." (Vol. i, p. 397.)

"The dangers which threaten the American Union do not originate in the diversity of interests or of opinions, but in the various characters and passions of the Americans. The men who inhabit the vast terri-

tory of the United States are almost all the issue of a common stock; but the effects of the climate, and more especially of slavery, have gradually introduced very striking differences between the British settler of the Southern States and the British settler of the North." (Vol. i, p. 402.)

"I think that I have demonstrated that the existence of the present confederation depends entirely on the continued assent of all the confederates; and, starting from this principle, I have inquired into the causes which may induce the several States to separate from the others. The Union may, however, perish in two different ways: one of the confederate States may choose to retire from the compact, and so forcibly to sever the Federal tie; and it is to this supposition that most of the remarks that I have made apply: or the authority of the Federal Government may be progressively entrenched on by the simultaneous tendency of the united republics to resume their independence." (Vol. i, p. 412.)

"The Constitution had not destroyed the distinct sovereignty of the States; and all communities, of whatever nature they may be, are impelled by a secret propensity to assert their independence." (Vol. i, p. 415.)





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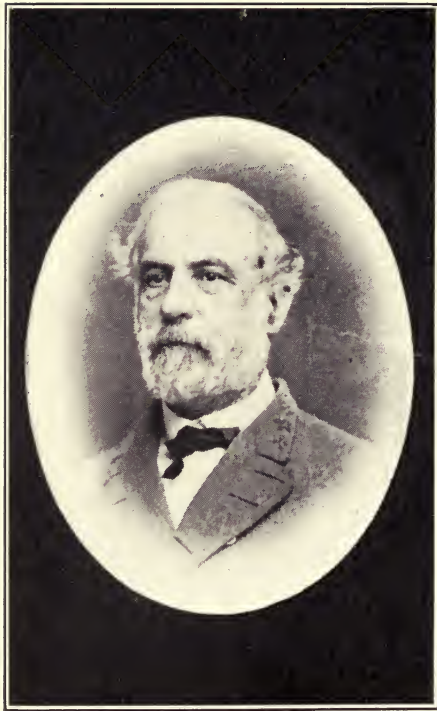
# ROBERT E. LEE

Centennial Celebration of His Birth Held Under the  
Auspices of the University of South Carolina  
on the Nineteenth Day of January, 1907









PRESENTED TO MRS. JOYNES BY MRS. LEE, AS  
THE BEST LIKENESS OF THE GENERAL.

ROBERT E. LEE  
Centennial Celebration

OF

His Birth

Held Under the Auspices

OF THE

University of South Carolina

ON

the Nineteenth Day of January

1907

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Columbia S. C.  
The State Company, Printers  
1907

(From Journal of the House of Representatives, Jan. 9, 1907.)

On motion of Representative Porter A. McMaster :

*Be it Resolved,* That the use of the Hall of the House of Representatives be extended to the Faculty of the University of South Carolina on the evening of January 19th inst., for public services commemorative of the centenary of the birth of Gen. Robert E. Lee.



## PROGRAMME

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Music by University Glee Club

Prayer, by the Rev. W. P. Witsell

Music

Address, "Lee, the Soldier,"

by Major Henry Edward Young, of General Lee's Staff

Music

Address, "Lee, the College President,"

by Dr. Edward S. Joynes, formerly of General Lee's Faculty

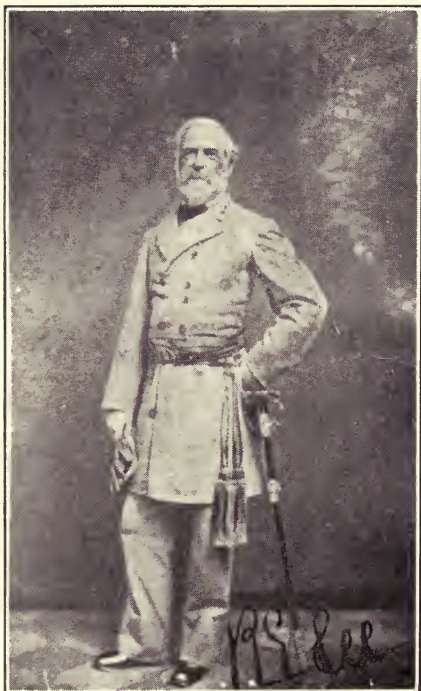
Music

Presentation of medal offered by Wade Hampton Chapter,  
U. D. C., to Mr. Eugene Blake for best essay on: "Was  
Secession a Constitutional Right prior to 1861?" by Professor  
Yates Snowden

Music







PRESENTED CHRISTMAS, 1867, BY MRS. LEE TO  
WALKER W. JOYNES; THEN FIVE  
YEARS OLD.

## MAJOR YOUNG'S ADDRESS

---

Mr. President, and professors of the University of South Carolina: Let me in the first place thank you, and thank you very sincerely for the honor you have conferred on me in giving me the opportunity of doing myself honor by showing my appreciation of and admiration for the great soldier and man—"the greatest of all modern leaders," and "the most perfect man"—under whom I had the honor of serving personally during the late war. It is needless to say how greatly I value and cherish the memory of my almost daily association with him during the later years of the war.

There are two men with whom in life I have associated intimately and who, though very different in some respects, always impressed me as great men—the greatest I have been privileged to associate with. And yet how different their fates. The one sinking slowly from the ken of men and now within a generation nearly forgotten—the other growing greater day by day—a world hero—Mr. James L. Petigru and Gen. Robert E. Lee. Both were absolutely fearless, both absolutely upright, both absolutely truthful, both devoted to duty, both exercising during life a wide influence. Both ready to help in distress. To whom the poor and needy and weak never appealed in vain; both with intellects that placed them in their several spheres far above all their contemporaries. And yet, before the generation that knew him has passed away, I have been asked in a body of lawyers, when I mentioned Petigru as the highest type of the lawyer I had ever had the privilege of knowing, who he was, when he lived, and what he had done. He lived and worked and toiled faithfully for that jealous mistress the law, and already his great reputation is seen to have been written on the seashore of time and is rapidly washing away.

With Lee, on the contrary, the great reputation graven on the monuments more eternal than brass are but graven deeper and deeper by time. And whatever in the future may happen to the

South, whether it produces statesmen again, known to the whole world—without whose name the world's history cannot be written—and who shall join in the building up of this mightiest empire the world has ever known—or be, as at present, the mere fly on the chariot shaft; its name and history as identified with Lee and his glorious Army of Northern Virginia will be engraved deeply on those same tablets of brass and will not sink to oblivion. But it is time that I turn to the duty you have so kindly assigned to me as one of the staff of General Lee.

To sketch even the outline of General Lee's military career till his life, begun by Colonel Marshall and yet to be completed, is given to the world, laying open more than what mere official records can show, will necessarily be unsatisfactory.

Of course it is easy to sketch his career from West Point, through the Mexican war, to the opening of the great Civil war. The history of those days has been fully written, and no doubt finally written; but from that time on no full history, sanctioned and approved by him, or those naturally acquainted with his views, as, for instance, Colonel Taylor, perhaps his most intimate staff officer during the war, has been written. That by Colonel Long, his staff officer, fills the void only in part—it is so brief. The campaign of West Virginia is not now recognized as the absolute failure it was considered in 1862, and the clamor of the South Carolina papers when the "mud-digger" was given command over the coast of South Carolina, Georgia, etc., against him, and the demand that a brigadier general of this State should have the command, sounds now as the mere madness of the passing hour; fortunately it was then treated as the madness of the ignorant, and was without influence.

While it is true that the defense of the seacoast of Georgia and South Carolina as planned by General Lee remained substantially unchanged during the four years of the war, and was successfully maintained, yet the most interesting part of Lee's career, and that most known to the world, which, from no mean soldier (Lord Wolseley), has won for him the well-earned praise of being not only the "greatest soldier of his age," but also of "the most perfect man I ever met," dates from his taking command of the Army of Northern Virginia—great praise, certainly, when we recall that the man thus placed above his compeers was the unsuccessful

Lee compared with the unsuccessful Sydney Johnson, Joe Johnston, "Stonewall" Jackson, etc., the successful Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, McPherson, etc., of this country, and the successful von Moltke and Skobelev, etc., of Europe. Von Moltke, too, we should recall, places General Lee above Wellington.

Lord Wolseley wrote thus just after Lee's death: Forty years later, in his personal memoirs, when time had matured his judgment, Lord Wolseley styles himself: "A close student of war all my (his) life, and especially of this Confederate war, and with a full knowledge of the battles fought during its progress," repeats his judgment that General Lee was "the greatest of all modern leaders," and compares his campaign of 1862 with that of Napoleon's of 1796. Speaking of his visit to General Lee, he says: "I have taken no special trouble to remember all he said to me then (1862) and during subsequent conversations, and yet it is still fresh in my recollection. But it is natural that it should be so, for he was the ablest general, and to me seemed the greatest man I ever conversed with; and yet I have had the privilege of meeting von Moltke and Prince Bismarck, and at least on one occasion had a very long and intensely interesting conversation with the latter. General Lee was one of the few men who ever seriously impressed and awed me with their natural and their inherent greatness. Forty years have come and gone since our meeting, and yet the majesty of his manly bearing, the genial winning grace, the sweetness of his smile and the impressive dignity of his old-fashioned style of address, come back to me amongst the most cherished of my recollections. His greatness made me humble, and I never felt my own individual insignificance more keenly than I did in his presence. His was indeed a beautiful character, and of him it might truthfully be written: 'In righteousness he did judge and make war'."

Nor does Lord Wolseley in these opinions stand alone. His judgment is that of such military writers and critics as Chesney, Lawler, and of the higher press, Northern as well as foreign.

Says Lord Wolseley again: "I desire to make known to the reader not only the renowned soldier, whom I believe to have been the greatest of his age, but to give some insight into the character of one whom I have always considered the most perfect man I ever met."



It would, therefore, be a mere vain repetition to repeat praises made by those so competent to judge and whose opinions will weigh.

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It will, therefore, be far more profitable and suitable to this occasion to note an apparent change of opinion which some of the more recent writers seem to take, and the effort to elevate one of Lee's subordinates above him; passing over the omissions, for instance, of General Jackson and giving him the credit due really to General Lee. Is this well founded? General Jackson has had the good fortune of having his life written by several devoted friends—two clergymen, members of his staff—more apt to be partisans than cool judges—and Colonel Henderson, even, seems to be guided by Mrs. Jackson.

General Lee's life has not yet been written by such, except the brief life suggested rather than written by General Long. So the world has General Jackson's side of the case, while the other is wanting. The battles around Richmond were brilliant successes for General Lee, and no one disputes that he planned them; yet they were not as complete as they should have been, and would have been, if General Jackson had not delayed at Ashland, and again at White Oak Swamp. General Jackson had been sent for by General Lee before he opened the battles, and brought to Richmond from the valley, and fully informed of the campaign planned. The initial move hinged upon Jackson. With his wing of the army he should have passed Ashland and been at Slash Church practically on the 25th of June, 1862, and then attacked McClellan on the flank, but he had not then passed Ashland, and did not attack McClellan till the afternoon of the 26th, thus occasioning the check and useless heavy loss at Beaver Dam; the enemy retired from the latter place as soon as Jackson reached his flank. So also the next day at White Oak Swamp. By his delay there he failed to support the attack of Longstreet and Hill at Frazier's farm, and thus "McClellan only escaped destruction through the non-execution of Lee's orders." Colonel Henderson and Captain Battine would have us believe that these were errors of General Lee, and not of General Jackson; in Lee's failing to give Jackson precise orders.

General Longstreet thus states the matter: "When he (Lee) set out on his first campaign (Chickahominy) with the army, the key of the campaign was intrusted to General Jackson, who named the hour for the opening and failed to meet his own appointment. At the time he appointed, A. P. Hill's, D. H. Hill's, and Longstreet's commands were in position waiting (Beaver Dam, etc.). About eight hours after his time was up, he deliberately marched past the engagement and went into camp, a mile or more behind the hot battle. He remained in his camp next morning, and permitted the enemy, dislodged of his position of the day before, to march by him to a strong position at Gaines's Mill. When his column reached that position, his leading division (D. H. Hill's) engaged the enemy's right without orders. He called the division off and put his command in position to intercept the enemy's retreat towards the Pamunkey, from which he was afterwards called to his part in the general engagement. The next day he had the cavalry and part of his infantry in search of the enemy's next move. At my headquarters were two clever young engineers who were sent to find what the enemy was about; they were the first to report the enemy's retreat towards James River. Orders were given for Jackson to follow on the direct line of retreat, also Magruder and Huger. My command was ordered around through the outskirts of Richmond, by the Darbytown Road, to interpose between McClellan's army and the James River, about twenty miles; the other troops marching by routes of about nine miles. We were in position on the evening of the 29th June, and stood in front of the enemy all of the 30th, fighting a severe battle in the afternoon. Magruder and Huger got up after night, and Jackson on the morning of the 1st. After the battle of the 1st, Jackson, Magruder and Huger were ordered in direct pursuit along the route of retreat, my command by the longer route of Nance's Store. Jackson's column and mine met on the evening of the 3rd near Westover, the enemy's new position."

Naturally this may be tinged somewhat by Longstreet's bitterness under the criticisms of himself after Gettysburg; still Longstreet was not one to misrepresent facts.

Again, of this White Oak Swamp delay, Colonel Allan, Jackson's own chief of ordnance and his devoted friend, says:

“Only the column under Longstreet and Hill did anything, the others accomplished nothing. They did not even prevent reinforcements from going to the Federal centre. It is impossible to deny that General Lee was very poorly served on the occasion by his subordinates. Holmes was so imposed upon by Porters’ demonstration that he was not only paralyzed for the day, but continued inactive during the great struggle at Malvern Hill. \* \* \* Magruder, out of the fight, spent the afternoon in marching and countermarching. \* \* \* Huger’s feeble operations were the most disappointing of all. He was nearest to Longstreet, and he was almost on the edge of the battlefield, yet he did nothing, \* \* \* nor is it possible to free from blame on this occasion a greater soldier than Holmes or Huger; Jackson, ignorant of the country, had, in the swamp and Franklin’s veterans, substantial causes of delay, but they were not such obstacles as usually held Jackson in check. \* \* \* Jackson’s comparative inaction was a matter of surprise at the time, and has never been satisfactorily explained.”

Remarkable as the admission of Colonel Allan, Jackson’s staff officer, that Jackson is really to blame for the failure of a complete victory in the battles around Richmond, equally remarkable is the present admission of another of his staff officers (Rev. Mr. Jones), that Chancellorsville is General Lee’s work, not Jackson’s. Instead of suggesting the flank movement to General Lee’s question, “How can we get at these people?” he replies only, “You know; show me what to do, and I’ll do it.” When General Lee had explained the movement, he caught it quick enough and executed it with his usual force and vigor. “Such an executive officer the sun never shone on,” said General Lee of him; or, as McClellan is said to have expressed it, “Jackson is the best executive officer of the Confederacy, as Lee is its greatest general.” Despite of all the balderdash and exaggerated fine writing of General Gordon, Captain Battine has gone too fast and too far ahead, even of Colonel Henderson, in claiming Chancellorsville for General Jackson. The truth is now gradually coming to light. It is becoming clearer and clearer that Chancellorsville was fought, as it was fought, really against Jackson’s ideas. He wished to attack Sedgwick—not move on Hooker. Even when in front of Chancellorsville, he thought Hooker would cross the river

and move to support Sedgwick. "General Lee seemed to be the only one who seemed to have the absolute conviction that the real move of the Federal army was the one he was meeting then." Replying to Jackson, finally, "But, general, we must get ready to attack the enemy if we should find him here tomorrow, and you must make all arrangements to move around his right flank." Then, says a bystander, "Jackson's face lighted with a smile, and rising and touching his cap, he said, 'My troops will move at four o'clock.'"

General Lee's own words are in a letter he wrote in reply to an enquiry by Bledsoe, seeking to give Jackson the credit of Chancellorsville, but wise enough to enquire if he was correct: "I have the greatest reluctance to say anything that might be considered as detracting from his (Jackson's) well-deserved fame, for I believe no one was more convinced of his worth or appreciated him more highly than myself; yet your knowledge of military affairs, if you have none of the events themselves, will teach you that this could not have been so. Every movement of an army must be well considered and properly ordered, and every one who knew General Jackson must know that he was too good a soldier to violate this fundamental principle. In the operations around Chancellorsville, I overtook General Jackson, who had been placed in command of the advance as the skirmishers of the approaching armies met, advanced with the troops to the Federal line of defenses, and was on the field until their whole army recrossed the Rappahannock. There is no question as to who was responsible for the operations of the Confederates, or to whom any failure would have been charged."

The writer of General Jackson's life, to exonerate him from the blame of the failure at Ashland and White Oak Swamp to play his allotted part in the battles before Richmond, throws the blame on Lee, as having failed to give Jackson specific orders. I don't suppose that to Longstreet, or Jackson, or Hill, or Stuart, General Lee ever gave iron-clad orders. When Jackson had been informed of the plans of the attack and fully discussed them at Richmond, and knew the time fixed for the movement of the troops, on the left of the enemy, he could not have failed to know that he was to attack at that time, and to cooperate. Yet greater are the misrepresentations which have been made by General Jackson's



admirers as to Chancellorsville. Of a victory, perhaps the greatest won by the Army of Northern Virginia, in the triumph of which Providence, alas, kept him from sharing, everything has been claimed for him. Fortunately so openly that General Lee was compelled, by their own action, to notice the claim. He does this in his usual modest, self-deprecatory way, viz., in a letter to Mrs. Jackson herself of 25th January, 1866, in reply to one from her, I quote from it: "The opinion of General Jackson in reference to the propriety of attacking the Federal Army under General McClellan at Harrison's Landing is not, I think, correctly stated. Upon my arrival there the day after General Longstreet and himself, I was disappointed that no opportunity for striking General McClellan on the retreat, or in his then position, had occurred; and went forward with General Jackson alone on foot, and after a careful reconnoissance of the whole line and position, he certainly stated to me at that time the impropriety of attacking. I am misrepresented at the battle of Chancellorsville in proposing an attack in front, the first evening of our arrival. *On the contrary, I decided* against it, and stated to General Jackson we must attack on our left as soon as practicable, and the necessary movement of troops began immediately." If Lee decided against this, Jackson alone could have proposed it.

This letter of General Lee settles forever, or should settle forever, the claim of General Jackson's friends that he was the author of the celebrated flank movement at Chancellorsville, or that he even suggested it. It is absurd enough to claim that in any battle a subordinate should direct it and have the credit for it. He obeys orders, and General Jackson said often he would obey any officer in command cheerfully, but General Lee he would follow blindfold, and at Chancellorsville, he did obey. But, in fact, Chancellorsville was not fought according to Jackson's suggestion at all. When Sedgwick crossed the Rappahannock and formed his line of battle in front of Fredericksburg, while Hooker crossed the same river some miles above, Jackson urged that Sedgwick should be attacked. General Lee was satisfied that the main attack was to be by Hooker, and that he should attack Hooker, and not wait for his attack. I well remember the occasion, almost every staff officer of Lee had been sent out to observe Sedgwick's movements. The two armies were in line opposite each other, but

both apparently absolutely quiet—so quiet that a deer which was caught between the lines was pursued by the men of both sides. The moment it passed a certain imaginary line the men of one side ceased pursuit, and the opposite side took it up, till the deer was finally caught by the Federals, but not even a picket fired a shot. During the friendly contest not a shot was fired even by a picket.

General Lee was confined to his bed by the disease which finally troubled him so much, the adhesion of the pleura to the side, and Jackson sat by his bedside discussing the situation. Upon Lee's staff reporting General Jackson's views still differing from his, General Lee got up from his bed and rode to a hill, from which most of the ground could be seen. For about an hour, with his glasses, he closely and silently scrutinized the enemy's lines. Then, turning to General Jackson, he remarked: "Our fight must be at Chancellorsville," and by signal ordered General Anderson, then near Chancellorsville with his division, not to bring on a fight, but to hold the enemy without doing this, and ordered McLaws to move to Anderson's aid at once, and ordered General Jackson to move his command before daylight to where Anderson was, near Chancellorsville, and to take command there till he (Lee) should reach the spot; and ordered his general staff to be ready before daylight to report to General Jackson. We were all ready before day, but General Jackson did not pass our quarters till the sun was well up, and his command followed a little later. General Long states that General Jackson passed headquarters at 9 a. m., but it was earlier, according to my recollection. About 9 a. m. General Jackson was upon the battlefield, and was arranging to open the battle with General Anderson's division, before Hill, Colston and Rodes were in line. General Lee, who had quitted his sick bed, learning this, reached the field on a gallop and the attack, by his order, was reduced to a skirmish till Hill and McLaws were in position to join, and then the real attack began, supported by Colston and Rodes in reserve. It is pleasant to mention here an anecdote of a brilliant soldier of the Confederacy, whose life was sacrificed for its sake. Jackson's corps was in three lines: First, Hill; second, Colston, and third, Rodes. Hill being outnumbered and hard pressed called on Colston for support. He replied he had no orders. The gallant, glorious, youthful Alabamian Rodes who, with his men were lying down

behind him, heard this. He sprang up and called his men, "Hill wants help, we'll help him." The men were up in a moment with a Rebel yell, and their charge, with Hill's, drove the enemy back and won the day and the handsome young brigadier his major generalship, for that evening General Lee asked it for him by telegraph. Colston was not heard of again in the Army of Northern Virginia after this battle.

Colonel Henderson, in his life of Stonewall Jackson, evidently writes on papers and memoranda furnished to him by Mrs. Jackson, and is evidently strongly biased by them; still he prints General Lee's letter to Mrs. Jackson correcting some of the Rev. Dr. Dabney's errors. Unfortunately, however, for the truth of history, the book that Colonel Henderson has written is the most important book on the war in Virginia, and is entirely openly partisan for General Jackson. General Lee's book on the war is not yet before the world. So the matter has gone and now, in the last English book on the subject, by Captain Battine, we find this most positive statement: "The fall of the chief who *designed* and *executed* the master stroke in the very hour of victory adds pathos to the story, and appropriately closed his (Jackson's) too brief career of glory. Great as were the moral and material results of the victory, they were bought at all too dear a price, for with the fatal shot which struck down Stonewall Jackson began the series of disastrous events leading to the conquest of the Confederacy." General Jackson, in fact, merely opened the battle of Chancellorsville. It was won the next day, when he had, unfortunately, been wounded and had been carried away from the field.

Doubtless it is true what Captain Battine says of General Jackson; every A. N. Va. man will join him in it most fully: "The possession of such a leader is of priceless value to any State in time of war." But the fact that General Jackson's achievements have been written of by his friends, his widow and chaplain apparently inspiring them, has given, I think, an undue color.

The valley campaign was ordered and conceived by General Johnston. General Johnston told me this himself, and his Memoirs verify it. Jackson executed his orders as only the "best executive officer the sun ever shone on" could execute them it is true. The same, changing the name of Joe Johnston to Lee, is true of his other campaigns, and so, doubtless, when the history of



the Civil War is fully written, General McClellan's opinion will be found the correct one, that "Lee, as a general, was incomparably the first of the Confederates, and Jackson, as an executive officer, without an equal among them."

The judgment of General Early, himself a soldier, and intimately acquainted with both Lee and Jackson, and having served throughout the war in the Army of Northern Virginia, will be accepted above that of Captain Battine.

"As glorious as was this victory (Chancellorsville) it nevertheless shed a gloom over the whole army and country, for in it had fallen the great lieutenant to whom General Lee had always intrusted the execution of his most *daring plans*, and who had proved himself so worthy of the confidence reposed in him. It is not necessary for me to stop here, to delineate the character and talents of General Jackson. As long as unselfish patriotism, Christian devotion, and purity of character, and deeds of heroism shall command the admiration of men, Stonewall Jackson's name and fame will be revered. Of all who mourned his death, none felt more acutely the loss the country and the army has sustained than General Lee. General Jackson had always appreciated and sympathized with the bold conceptions of the commanding general, and entered upon their execution with the most cheerful alacrity and zeal. General Lee never found it necessary to accompany him, to see that his plans were carried out, but could always trust him alone; and well might he say, when Jackson fell, that he had lost his 'right arm.'"

I don't think one need fear much that Captain Battine will change the view of history, which already seems to have put Lee and Jackson in their proper positions—one the natural commander, the other his right hand.

And perhaps, too, if we seek the opinions of English soldiers, that of Colonel Lawler may be nearer the truth than Captain Battine, viz.: "But, after all, the one name, which in connection with the great American Civil War *posterì narratum atque traditum superstes erit*, is the name of Robert Edward Lee"; and Colonel Chesney: "The day will come \* \* \* History will speak with a clear voice \* \* \* and place above all others the name of the great chief of whom we have written (Lee). In strategy, mighty; in battle, terrible; in adversity and in prosperity, a hero indeed;

with the simple devotion to duty and the rare purity of the ideal Christian knight, he joined all the kingly qualities of a leader of men."

"There is a true glory and a true honor: The glory of duty done. The honor of integrity and principle." After Lee's death, an old knapsack which he had used was found with a few bread crumbs and an old slip of dingy paper with these words written on them. This had gone through the war with him—aye, through life.

And so, despite modern seekers after something new, the Confederacy can safely leave the memory of its greatest man, whether citizen or soldier "General R. E. Lee, the most stainless of living commanders, and, except in fortune, the greatest."

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## ADDRESS

## LEE, THE COLLEGE PRESIDENT

BY DR. EDWARD S. JOYNES.

The most glorious object in nature is the sun. Yet in full meridian its brightness dazzles the eye. But sometimes, in the subdued glow of sunset, its magic radiance is revealed in resplendent charm of light and color, more beautiful because less dazzling, than the midday brilliance. So it is sometimes, but rarely, in human character. So it was, notably, with him whose statue guards this capitol—South Carolina's noblest hero and exemplar, Hampton—whose work in the evening of his life, as the great Pacificator, outshines even the glory of his military achievements. So it was, most conspicuously, with Robert E. Lee, who in his latest years, in the humble office of a college president, bearing bravely the burden of daily duty, beneath the weight of a disappointment which might well have crushed the strongest heart, was yet to illustrate and confirm the finest traits of a character whose perfection and power, on the highest fields of action, had already won the admiration of the world.

I am to speak of General Lee as a College President only—not at all of his larger life or achievement in military service. In this humbler capacity it was my privilege to serve him and to know him intimately—a privilege—ah, how great!—so great that I did not realize it until it was gone. Yet, ever since, I look back upon it, with increasing estimate, as the golden age of my life—and with ever increasing regret that I could not know him better and serve him better than I did. Such, I know, was the feeling of all of us who were privileged to serve with him—of whom I am now, with one exception, the sole survivor.\* Today, all over the

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\*The other survivor of the faculty is my class-mate at the University of Virginia (1853), Alexander L. Nelson, Professor of Mathematics for fifty-two years (1854-1906)—now retired on the Carnegie Foundation. Others, since distinguished as teachers or otherwise, were then young instructors, but not members of the faculty. The Rev. Dr. J. William Jones, General Lee's biographer and trusted friend, was one of the chaplains of the College. It would be impossible to enumerate the students of that day who have since attained distinction.

South, in many colleges as elsewhere, this Centennial is fitly celebrated; for General Lee, as a college president, has ennobled every college in the land, and the memory of his great example will be cherished so long as recurring centennials shall come.

In what I shall say to you, my friends, I shall speak without ornament or oratory, but simply, and of intimate personal knowledge. I shall make large use of material written by myself soon after General Lee's death, when recollection was fresher than now.\* Much of documentary evidence, which, though interesting, has already been widely published, I shall omit; and if, on other somewhat technical points, I seem to go too much into detail, my apology must be that, in my opinion, all authentic facts concerning General Lee, as a college president, are of permanent interest and importance.

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General Lee accepted the presidency of Washington College, in the first place, from a profound and deliberate sense of duty. The same high principle of action that had characterized his conduct in the gravest crises of public affairs marked his decision here; and here, as ever, *duty* alone determined his choice.\* There was absolutely nothing in this position that could have tempted him. Not only was it uncongenial with all the habits of his past life, and remote from all the associations in which he had formerly taken pleasure, but it was at that time most uninviting in itself. The college to which he was called was broken in fortune and in hope. The war had practically closed its doors. Its buildings had been pillaged and defaced, and its library scattered. It had now neither money nor credit, and it was even doubtful whether it would be shortly reopened at all for the reception of students. The faculty were few in number, disorganized and dispirited. Of the slender endowment that had survived the war hardly anything was available, and ready money could not be secured even for the most immediate and pressing wants of the college. Under these circumstances the offer of the presidency to General Lee seemed well-nigh presumptuous; and surely it was an offer from which he had nothing to expect, either of fortune or of fame. The

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\*In December, 1870, for the *University Monthly* (March, 1871).

\*His letter of acceptance, often printed, strikingly illustrates this trait of his character, as well as his modesty and unselfishness.

men, however, who made this election, the trustees of Washington College—ever honored be their memory for their noble conception—had not calculated in vain in their estimate of General Lee's character. They felt that this position, however humble it might seem, would afford to him what from their knowledge of the man they were sure would be the most acceptable to him—a sphere of duty in which he could spend his days in the service of his beloved people; and though the country looked on astonished and incredulous, the result showed that they had not been mistaken.\* Suffice it to say here, that it was a deliberate sense of duty to his fellow-countrymen, and a desire to pay back as far as he could, through their sons, the sufferings and sorrows of his own generation in the South, that determined his decision. He had already fully resolved not to leave Virginia under any circumstances; and this position, humble as it seemed to be, gave him the wished-for opportunity of laboring for her people and for the South. Therefore he accepted it.

The profound sense of duty which marked General Lee's acceptance of this office characterized also his whole administration of it. He entertained the profoundest convictions on the importance of educational influences, both to individuals and to the country, and the deepest sense of personal responsibility in his own office. He felt that an institution like Washington College owed duty not only to its own students but to the whole country, and that its moral obligations were not only supreme within its own sphere, but were attached to the wider interests of public virtue and of true religion among all the people. Everybody around him felt unconsciously that he was actuated by these principles, and all were impressed by his high conceptions of duty and the singleness of his devotion to it. Nothing else, indeed, could have sustained him so serenely through so many and so constant details of labor and of trial. Nothing else could have held his thoughts so high or kept his heart so strong in the midst of daily tasks always so severe, often so trivial and discouraging. But he never flagged; and though he fully comprehended the difficulties of his office, and was often wearied with its incessant labors, no word of

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\*Details of this event—as of many other facts herein referred to—may be found in Jones' "Personal Reminiscences."



despondency fell from his lips. He felt that he was *doing his duty*. "I have," he said, as reported by the Hon. Mr. Hilliard,\* "a self-imposed task which I cannot forsake"; and in this spirit he met all the details of his daily labors, cheerfully to the last. Again and again, during his life at Lexington, were tempting offers urged upon him—offers of large income, with comparative ease and more active and congenial employment; but though he fully appreciated these considerations and was not indifferent to the attractions presented by such offers, he turned from them all with the same reply. He had chosen his post of duty and he clung to it. Year by year the conception of his duty seemed to grow stronger with him; and year by year the college, as its instrument and representative, grew dearer to him. And as gradually the fruits of his labors began to be manifest, and the moral and intellectual results of his influence approved themselves even to his own modest self-estimate, his heart grew only warmer, and his zeal more zealous, in his work.

His sense of personal duty was also expanded into a warm solicitude for all who were associated with him. To the faculty he was an elder brother, beloved and revered, and full of all tender sympathy.\* To the students he was a father in carefulness, in encouragement, in reproof. Their welfare and their conduct and character as gentlemen were his chief concern; and this solicitude was not limited to their collegiate years, but followed them abroad into life. He thought it to be the office of a college not merely to educate the intellect, but to make *Christian men*. The moral and religious character of the students was more precious in his eyes even than their intellectual progress, and was made the special object of his constant personal solicitude. In his annual reports to the trustees, which were models of clear and dignified composition, he always dwelt with peculiar emphasis upon these interests; and nothing in the college gratified him more than its marked moral and religious improvement during his administration. To the Rev. Dr. White he said, as affectingly narrated soon after his death by that venerable minister: "I shall be dis-

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\*See Jones' "Personal Reminiscences of Gen. R. E. Lee," p. 146.

\*General Lee's treatment of his faculty was not only courteous, but kind and affectionate. My wife reminds me that once, when I was detained at home by sickness, General Lee came every day, through a deep Lexington snow, and climbed the high stairs, to inquire about me and to comfort her.

appointed, sir—I shall fail in the leading object that brought me here—unless these young men all become consistent Christians.” Other expressions, bearing eloquent witness to the same truth, might be quoted; but none could be more eloquent than the steady tenor of his own life, quietly yet constantly devoted to the highest ends of duty and of religion.\*

Such were the principles which actuated General Lee as president of Washington College, and their effects showed themselves in all the details of his administration. In the discipline of the college his moral influence was supreme. A disciplinarian in the ordinary sense of the term, as it is often most unworthily applied, he was not. He was no seeker-out of small offences, no stickler for formal regulations.† In his construction of college rules, and in his dealings with *actions* generally, he was most liberal; but in his estimate of *motives*, and in the requirements of principle and honor, he was exacting to the last degree. Youthful indiscretion found in him the most lenient of judges; but falsehood or meanness had no toleration with him. He looked rather to the principles of good conduct than to mere outward acts. He was most scrupulous in exacting a proper obedience to lawful authority; but he was always the last to condemn, and the most just to hear the truth, even in behalf of the worst offenders. Hence in the use of college punishments he was cautious, forbearing, and lenient; but he was not the less firm in his demands and prompt, when need was, in his measures. His reproof was stern, yet kind, and often melting in its tenderness; and his appeals, always addressed to the noblest motives, were irresistible. The hardest offenders were alike awed by his presence, and moved

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\*Great as was the need of the College for academic buildings, yet the first building erected, under General Lee's direction, was a chapel for worship—the same under which his remains lie buried—and he never failed there to attend morning prayers or public worship. (Gen. Lee's views on religious training are fully set forth by my colleague, Rev. Dr. Kirkpatrick, in Dr. Jones' "Personal Reminiscences of General Lee.")

†The "honor principle"—which is the pride of Southern colleges—never had a stronger advocate or a better illustration than General Lee. He did not approve of military regulations in college. I have heard him say that military discipline was, unfortunately, necessary in military education, but was, in his opinion, a most unsuitable training for civil life. A still more remarkable expression is recorded by Professor Humphreys, in the memorial number of the *Wake Forest Student*: "He warned me" (Prof. H. was then an instructor in the College) "against inflexible rules adopted beforehand, and suddenly startled me by saying: 'The great mistake of my life was taking a military education.'"

often to tears by his words; and there was no student who did not dread a reproof from General Lee more than every other punishment. In all his official actions, and, indeed, in all his intercourse with the students, he looked to the elevation of the tone of principle and opinion among themselves, as the vital source of good conduct, rather than to the simple repression of vice. His discipline was moral rather than punitive. Hence there were few cases of dismissal or other severe punishment during his administration, and hence, also, the need for such punishments became ever less and less.

The influence of this policy, aided especially by the mighty influence of his personal character, was all-powerful. The elevation of tone and the improvement in conduct were steady and rapid. Immediately after the war the young men of the South were wild and unrestrained, and acts of disorder were frequent; in the latter years of his administration hardly a single case of serious discipline occurred. I doubt, indeed, whether at any other college in the world so many young men could have been found as free from misconduct, or marked by as high a tone of feeling and opinion, as were the students of Washington College during these latter years of General Lee's life. The students felt this and were proud of it; and they were proud of themselves and of their college as representatives of the character and influence of Lee.

Yet not the less was he rigidly exacting of duty and scrupulously attentive to details. By a system of reports, weekly and monthly—almost military in their exactness—which he required of each professor, he made himself acquainted with the standing and progress of every student in every one of his classes\* These reports he studied carefully and was quick to detect shortcomings. He took care, also, to make himself acquainted with each student personally, to know his studies, his boarding-house, his associations, disposition and habits; and though he never obtruded this knowledge, the students knew that he possessed it and that his interest followed them everywhere. Nor was it a moral influence

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\*An illustration of this careful attention is related by one of my colleagues: On one occasion the delinquency of a student was mentioned in faculty meeting. "Mr. ———," said General Lee, "I do not know him"—and seemed mortified at the omission. On inquiry it was found that the student had recently entered during the absence of General Lee—who at once proceeded to make his acquaintance.

alone that he exerted in the college. He was equally careful of its intellectual interests. Though not personally engaged in teaching, he watched the progress of every class, attended all the examinations and frequently the recitations, and strove constantly to stimulate both professors and students to the highest attainments.† The whole college, in a word, felt his influence as an ever-present motive, and his character was quietly yet irresistibly impressed upon it, not only in the general working of all its departments, but in all the details of each.

Of this influence General Lee, modest as he was, was perfectly aware and, like a prudent ruler, he husbanded it with a wise economy. He preferred to confine his direct interposition to purely personal acts; and rarely, and then only on critical occasions, did he step forward to present himself before the whole body of students in the full dignity of his presidential office. On these occasions, which were always rare and in his later years hardly ever occurred, he would quietly post an address to the students, in which, appealing only to the highest principles of conduct, he sought to dissuade them from threatened evil. These addresses, which the boys designated as his "*General Orders*," were always of immediate efficacy, and no student would have been tolerated by his fellow-students who would have dared to disregard such an appeal from General Lee.\*

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†General Lee never failed to attend every examination, dividing the time among the several classes. Every week he devoted an hour or more to attending recitations. He came when least expected, and his presence was a stimulus to both students and professors—such as I have never since experienced. He would remain 10 or 15 minutes and then pass to another class. His bow, as he entered and left the room, was an impressive lesson in courtesy—that gracious courtesy which now seems to me to have almost departed from the new generation.

\*One of these addresses—on an occasion of threatened peril, when a company of Federal soldiers was encamped at Lexington, ready to take advantage of any disorder—is here appended. The original, copied for Gen. Lee by Mrs. Joy nes and by him presented to her, now hangs in my study.

Washington College, 26 Nov., 1866.

The faculty desires to call the attention of the students to the disturbances which occurred in the streets of Lexington on the nights of Friday and Saturday last. They believe that none can contemplate them with pleasure, or can find any reasonable grounds for their justification. These acts are said to have been committed by students of the college with the apparent object of disturbing the peace and quiet of a town whose inhabitants have opened their doors for their reception and accommodation, and who are always ready to administer to their comfort and pleasure.

It requires but little consideration to see the error of conduct which could only have proceeded from thoughtlessness and a want of reflection. The faculty therefore appeal to the honour and self-respect of the students to prevent any similar



General Lee was also most laborious in the duties of his office as a college president. He gave himself wholly to his work. His occupation was constant, almost incessant. He went to his office daily at eight o'clock, and rarely returned home until one or two. During this time he was almost incessantly engaged in college matters, giving his personal attention to the minutest details, and always ready to receive visitors on college business. His office was always open to students or professors, all whose interests received his ready consideration. His correspondence meanwhile was very heavy, yet no letter that called for an answer was ever neglected. It was stated by the editor of a Virginia paper that to a circular letter of general educational interest, addressed by him to a large number of college presidents, General Lee was the only one that replied; yet he was the greatest and perhaps the busiest of them all. In addition to the formal reports, which he always revised and signed himself, his correspondence with the parents and guardians of students was intimate and explicit, on every occasion that required such correspondence. Many of these letters are models of beautiful composition and noble sentiment.\*

These varied duties grew upon him year after year with the expanding interests of the college; and year after year he seemed to become more devoted to them. Again and again did the trustees and faculty seek to lessen his labors; but his carefulness of duty and natural love of work seemed to render it impossible. Equally, he declined donations offered expressly to raise his salary; for the college, he said, needed money more than he did. The writer has heard the remark made that General Lee gave himself to the duties of President of Washington College as though he had never known any other duties or any other ambition; and this was true. He himself wrote to an old and famous comrade in arms, "I am charmed with the duties of civil life."

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occurrence, trusting that their sense of what is due to themselves, their parents and the institution to which they belong, will be more effectual in teaching them what is right and manly than anything they can say.

There is one consideration connected with these disorderly proceedings which the faculty wish to bring to your particular notice: the example of your conduct, and the advantage taken of it by others, to commit outrages for which you have to bear the blame. They therefore exhort you to adopt the only course capable of shielding you from such charges: the effectual prevention of all such occurrences in future.

R. E. LEE, Pres. W. C.

\*Some of these may be found among General Lee's published letters.

It can be truly said that he was wholly absorbed in his work, his noble conception of which made it great, and worthy even of him.

But General Lee was not only earnest and laborious, he was also able, as a college president. He was perfectly master of the situation, and thoroughly wise and skillful in all its duties, of organization and of policy as well as of detail. To this let the results of his administration bear testimony. He found the college practically bankrupt, disorganized, deserted; he left it strong, progressive, and crowded with students. It was not merely numbers that he brought to it, for these his great fame alone would have attracted; he gave it organization, unity, energy, and practical success. In entering upon his presidency he seemed at once fully to comprehend the wants of the college, and its history during the next five years was but the development of his plans and the reflection of his wise energy. And these plans were not fragmentary, nor was this energy merely an industrious zeal. He had from the beginning a distinct policy which he had fully conceived and to which he steadily adhered, so that all his particular measures of progress were but consistent steps in its development. His object was nothing less than to establish and perfect an institution which should meet the highest needs of education in every department. At once, and without waiting for the means to be provided in advance, he proceeded to develop this purpose. Under his advice new chairs were created, and professors called to fill them; so that before the end of the first year the faculty was doubled in numbers. Later, additional chairs were created, and finally a complete system of departments was established and brought into full operation. To these departments, each one of which was complete in itself and under the individual control of its own professor, was given a compact and unique organization into a system of complete courses, with corresponding diplomas and degrees; which, while securing the perfect distinctness and responsibility of each department, gave perfect unity to them all. These courses were so adapted and mutually arranged as to avoid alike the errors of the purely elective system on the one hand and of the close curriculum on the other, and to secure, by a happy compromise, the best advantages of both. So admirably was this plan conceived and administered that, heterogeneous as were the students especially in the earlier years,

each one found at once his proper place, and nearly all were kept in the line of complete and systematic study.

Under this organization, and especially under the inspiration of General Lee's central influence, the utmost harmony and the utmost energy pervaded all the departments of the college. The highest powers of both professors and students were called forth, under the fullest responsibility. The standards of scholarship were rapidly advanced; and soon the graduates of Washington College were the acknowledged equals of those from the best institutions elsewhere, and were eagerly sought after for the highest positions as teachers in the best schools. These results, which even in the few years of his administration had become universally acknowledged throughout the South, were due directly and immediately, more than to all other causes, to the personal ability and influence of General Lee, as president of the college.

General Lee's plans for the development of Washington College were not simply progressive; they were distinct and definite. He aimed to make the college represent at once the wants and the genius of the country. He fully realized the needs of the present age, and he desired to adapt the education of the people to their condition and their destiny. He was the ardent advocate of complete classical and literary culture\* Under his influence the classical and literary departments of the college were fully sustained. Yet he recognized the fact that material well-being is a condition of all high civilization, and therefore he sought to provide the means for the development of science and for its practical applications. He thought, indeed, that the best antidote to the materialistic tendencies of a purely scientific training was to be found in the liberalizing influences of literary culture, and that scientific and professional schools could best be taught when surrounded by the associations of a literary institution. He believed fully in the *university* idea and not in separate technical schools; but that, as hereafter they must live together, so young men of different pursuits should be educated together, and that their mutual influence would be mutually beneficial in college as in later life. He sought, therefore, to establish this mutual connection, and to consolidate all the departments of literary, scientific

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\*He was often heard to regret that he had not more fully completed his classical education before going to West Point.



and professional education under a common organization. Hence, at an early day, he called into existence the departments of Applied Mathematics and Engineering, of Modern Languages, and of Law, as part of the collegiate organization; and, later, he submitted to the trustees a plan for the complete development of the scientific and professional departments of the college, which will ever remain as an example of his enlarged wisdom, and which anticipated, by many years, the actual attainments of any school in this country.\* In addition to all the other reasons for mourning the death of General Lee, it is to be deeply regretted that he did not live to complete his great designs.\* Had he done so, he

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\*In the Washington College catalogue for 1868-69 (as part of General Lee's report to the Board of Trustees) may be found the outline of a School of Commerce, which now, after nearly forty years, Washington and Lee University (see its last Summer Bulletin) has just been able to realize. A like course was included (I regret to say, unsuccessfully) in the recommendations of our own University to the present Legislature. So did General Lee anticipate the future, and so do his works live after him.

I have elsewhere related how, in my first official interview with him, he emphasized the teaching of Spanish, remarking (prophetically) that our relations with Spanish-speaking countries were destined soon to become closer.

Properly to estimate the value of General Lee's work, as a college president, and especially of the plans left unfulfilled by his death, we must consider the condition of American colleges, generally, in the sixties, and not the more advanced conditions of the present day. And, for a just estimate of his labors, it must be remembered that in those days there were no telephones and no typewriters; and, so far as I can recall, General Lee never had any private secretary.

\*The successive catalogues of Washington College, 1866-70, exhibit an interesting chapter in the history of education, which, it is hoped, Washington and Lee University will some day make public; for they show, in a striking way, the progressiveness and the elevation of General Lee's ideas, beyond anything then realized, or even conceived, in American colleges. Having already established (in the first year) the departments of Applied Mathematics, of Civil Engineering, of Modern Languages and English, and of Law; and, in the second year, of History and English Literature, of Natural History and Geology, of Applied Chemistry and a Students' Business School, General Lee, in the next year (1868-09) recommended an extension of the scientific and practical courses, including: A Course of Agriculture; a Course of Commerce; a Course of Mechanical Engineering; a Course of Mining Engineering, and a Course of Chemistry Applied to the Arts.

In recommending these courses, which are fully set forth in his report to the trustees, and which anticipate the best work of the best schools of the present day, General Lee wrote:

"The great object of the whole plan is to provide the facilities required by the large class of our young men, who, looking to an early entrance into the practical pursuits of life, need a more direct training to this end than the usual literary courses. The proposed departments will also derive great advantage from the literary Schools of the College, whose influence in the cultivation and enlargement of the mind is felt beyond their immediate limits."

The fulfillment of these far-sighted plans was interrupted by his death (October 1870). The money, cheerfully subscribed for his sake all over the South, was no longer available.

would probably have left behind him an institution of learning which would have been a not less illustrious tribute to his fame than his most brilliant military achievements. As it is, he has left a university, which, dowered with his memory and his name, and inspired with his ideals, will always remain his noblest monument. There today his memory has been celebrated, and his praises spoken by a distinguished citizen of Massachusetts, who, once a Union soldier, is now proud to claim the name and fame of Lee as the property and the glory of the nation.

Outside of these more official statements there is much that I might say of General Lee in his more personal and private relations. Yet such detail might be wearisome, and, besides, much of what I would say might be unsuitable for public utterance. But no one who ever enjoyed the privilege of intercourse with General Lee can forget that splendid and captivating personality. He was the handsomest man I have ever seen. Besides the utmost perfection of form and feature he had a mingled sweetness and dignity of expression—an unconscious grace and majesty of appearance—"the like of which," says General Lord Wolseley, "I have never seen in other men." His familiar conversation was kind and gracious, and often lightened by the play of genial humor. He enjoyed a joke and could tell one with a keen zest—but never was there any approach to unseemly levity, and no man could have dared to take liberties with General Lee. In his home, where I often met him in his family circle, he was most loving and lovable—and especially his demeanor to Mrs. Lee, who for some years had been disabled by rheumatism, was marked by a visible and touching tenderness. Of this dear and gracious lady, who to my wife and children showed the mingled love of friend and mother,

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One other paragraph, from the Catalogue of 1867-68, I think worthy of record here:

"The discipline has been placed upon that basis on which it is believed experience has shown it can be most safely trusted—upon the honour and self-respect of the students themselves. The entire government, and the intercourse of the faculty with the students, are adapted to the encouragement of these principles. The cultivation of a high tone of truthfulness and honour, and of a just and lofty public opinion among the students as a body, is believed to furnish a better safeguard for the discipline of the College, as well as a better assurance for the development of manly character, than any repressive or punitive regulations that could be adopted. Strict attention to duty is nevertheless required of all."

and whose memorials are among the dearest possessions of our household, I may not speak here, except to say, that she was worthy to be the wife of General Lee and the mother of his children. Of his devotion to her, and of his affectionate and beautiful family life, the richest proofs are given in his published letters—the most intimate of which exhibit, most unconsciously, the finest traits of his character. To all women he always showed the most chivalrous and delicate courtesy. Of children he was affectionately fond, and to them he was irresistibly attractive. They were often seen gathered around him on the campus, or in his quiet walks.

In what is called “society” General Lee mingled but little—he had neither time nor inclination. But he was never forgetful of the “small, sweet courtesies of life.” A stranger visiting Lexington, a father or mother visiting a son at college, was sure of a call from General Lee, and with scrupulous courtesy he repaid the social attentions that he received. At his table he presided with his accustomed sweet and gentle dignity, and shared fully in social, often playful conversation. On special occasions he offered rare wines—I remember once some that had been bottled by his father. Of such he partook sparingly, but never—so far as I know—of any other intoxicating drink. He was fond of riding—almost every afternoon, when he had time; and General Lee on Traveller, booted and gauntleted—in winter with his military cloak—and accompanied, as he often was, by his favorite friend, Professor White—like himself a superb horseman—was the finest sight on which the eye could rest. How often—ah, how often! I have watched that splendid spectacle!

In business matters, private or official, General Lee was accurate and methodical, and his annual reports were models of clear and comprehensive statement. In correspondence he was careful and scrupulously punctual. On this subject I can speak with knowledge, for it often fell to my lot to help him—as we were all ready to do—in answering his many letters. In private conversation he was quiet and genial. He never spoke—at least not in my hearing—of the war or of politics, except with the utmost reserve. Here his recollections were, doubtless, too painful. I never heard from his lips a word either of bitterness or of apology, nor any criticism of others. It is known, I believe, that he had intended to write the

history of his army, but that he desisted, because he thought this could not be done "without causing too much pain." Thus, for the sake of others, he forebore what would have been his own supreme vindication. So tender, so self-denying, was this great heart.

As I look back now, through the haze of forty years, I can hardly realize, as I could not then, that this man, so quiet and so human—so simple in conduct and costume—so kind and friendly—so diligent in business—so social and cheerful—so unassuming and unpretending, as he shared or cheered our daily labors—was the same that had commanded great armies—had swayed the tide of battle—had borne the hopes and sorrows of a great people, and alike in victory and in defeat had given to his countrymen and to the world the last and highest ideal of the heroic commander. And yet—wonderful as it was and is—it was he; and after all, he was as great—as unequaled—on that college campus as on any battlefield—the same everywhere and always. "He was," says General Lord Wolseley, who knew him when at the head of his army, "the most perfect man I have ever met," and seemed "cast in a grander mould and made of finer metal than all other men." It is but small praise that I, who knew him in a narrower and more intimate sphere, should echo the same sentiment.\*

It has been already said that to the individual professors General Lee was always kind and accessible. In official relations he bore his authority modestly, yet always effectively. From each professor he required stated reports of his department, which he then transmitted to the trustees, with his own endorsement or comment, along with his own report. And after submitting his report, he always retired to his office to await the pleasure of the Board, in order not to embarrass their action by his presence.

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\*Since this was written I have, for the first time, read in *The Outlook*, Nov. 26, 1904, a most sympathetic and appreciative paper by Professor Edwin Mims, of Trinity College, N. C., entitled "Five Years of Robert E. Lee's Life," from which I regret that it is now too late to quote. This paper was written in review of "Recollections and Letters of General Lee," by (his son) Capt. Robert E. Lee—which volume, along with the "Personal Reminiscences," by the devoted chaplain, Dr. J. William Jones—offers the richest material for the study of Lee's life and character.

I venture to hope that Trinity College, in its celebration of this Centennial, will reprint Professor Mims's paper entire.



In the weekly meetings of the faculty General Lee exerted rather an influence which seemed unconscious both to himself and to us, than any visible authority. Faculty meetings are apt to be wordy, and sometimes a little excited; but General Lee never showed impatience, and his quiet presence calmed every rising storm. Enough occurred, sometimes, to show that he had both a quick and a strong temper, but never for a moment did he lose self-control or forget either dignity or courtesy. He exerted himself to minimize his own authority, and to leave to each professor the full sense of independence and responsibility. He never made a speech; rarely, indeed, spoke from his chair or attempted by any expression of opinion to influence a pending vote. It need not be added, however, that when General Lee's views were known, they were always decisive, and no really important measure was ever introduced without consultation with him. Besides its exceptionally great ability, his was the best organized and most efficient faculty I have ever served with. Its important work was done (as in Congress) by standing committees, and General Lee was always consulted in every case of importance or difficulty. Thus—though the initiative often came from another source—he was really identified with every important measure.

I have said that General Lee rarely spoke in faculty meetings, but his influence was not the less felt. I have already stated how strongly he advocated and enforced the principle of *honor* in dealing with students, and his aversion to minute regulations. And occasionally he gave utterance to thoughts which I have always remembered and now deem worthy of record. On one occasion a professor cited a certain regulation, to which another replied that it was a dead letter. "Then," said General Lee, "let it be at once repealed. A 'dead letter' inspires disrespect for the whole body of laws; but as long as it stands, it should be enforced." On another occasion a professor appealed to precedent, and added: "We must not respect persons." "I always respect persons," replied General Lee, "and care little for precedent." Again he said: "We must never make a rule that we cannot enforce"; and again, counseling a professor: "Never raise an issue which you are not prepared to maintain at all hazards"; and "Make no needless rules."

As to his views of *discipline*, enough perhaps has been said

already. I may state, however, with reference to an important and often recurring question, that General Lee held *idleness* to be not a negative but a positive vice. "A young man," he said, "is always doing something—if not good, then harm to himself and others"—so that merely persistent idleness was, with him, sufficient cause for dismissal. Another interesting fact was this: In the old college, students had lived in dormitories. Now, General Lee advised all younger students to board and lodge in private families—reserving the dormitories as a special privilege for older students—because, he said, they offered special opportunities of license, while younger boys needed the restraining influences of family life. This view was amply vindicated by results, while thus also the town and the college were drawn into closer fellowship and sympathy. There was no "town and gown" in Lexington.

One incident, personal to myself, is worth relating, for it teaches still, as it taught me, a valuable lesson. I often assisted General Lee in his correspondence—as we all sought to help him when we could. Once he gave me an important letter, which he asked me to answer "with care." I did my best. When I returned it, he read it carefully—then took up his pencil, and said: "Professor, this is very good, but it will be better if we strike out a few adjectives and adverbs"—then, handing it back, he said: "Now, if you will kindly copy it." I found that he had struck out every useless word, leaving the letter, of course, better than it was before. This incident I never forgot;—as a teacher of English I have quoted it again and again to my classes, and I recognize it now as the best lesson in composition I have ever received. In this connection I may remark that General Lee's own writings, whether official or private, are models of clear and correct form. He was a master of style, in both thought and expression.

Of his dealings with students, by which he won their love as well as their reverence, many interesting anecdotes are related—I mention only one or two, which came under my personal knowledge.

I have said that by weekly reports he kept in close touch with all the classes. Especially no single unexcused absence was ever overlooked.\* The delinquent was at once summoned to General

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\*I take the liberty of adding here that, in this respect, General Lee's discipline was a model. His punctuality made it at once strict and easy. By thus meeting neglect and disorder on the threshold, he prevented their continuance; and hence there were but few cases of prolonged misconduct to be dealt with by him or by the faculty.

Lee's office—always a most dreaded ordeal—and his reception varied from “grave to gay” according to circumstances. I give an instance of each: A young fellow whose general record was none too good, was summoned to answer for absence. He stated his excuse, and then, hesitatingly, he added another and another. “Stop, Mr. ——,” said General Lee, “one good reason should be sufficient,” with an emphasis on the word *good* that spoke volumes. Another, an excellent student, now a distinguished lawyer in Tennessee, was once beguiled into an unexcused absence. The dreaded summons came. With his heart in his boots he entered General Lee's office. The General met him smiling: “Mr. M., I am glad to see you are better.” “But, General, I have not been sick.” “Then I am glad to see you had better news from home.” “But, General, I have had no bad news.” “Ah,” said the General, “I took it for granted that nothing less than sickness or distressing news from home could have kept you from your duty.” Mr. M. told me, in relating this incident, that he then felt as if he wished the earth to open and swallow him. To a lazy fellow, he once said: “How is your mother? I am sure you must be devoted to her; you are so careful of the health of her son”; and to another, who was in rebellion against authority: “You cannot be a true man, until you learn to obey.”

Of General Lee's religious character I do not feel myself worthy to speak. That he was deeply, sincerely religious, with a perfect, trusting faith in God and in Christ—that by this he was guided and upborne in every act and every trial—that this he sought, unobtrusively yet earnestly to impress upon his family, his community, his college—as he had done upon his army—this is manifest from all the course of his life, as from his writings. His last afternoon was spent in a vestry meeting—at which I also was present—in the attempt to relieve his beloved rector (formerly his trusted companion in arms); and his last conscious act was, on that same evening, to attempt to ask a blessing upon the evening meal—when God called him, and he sank, unconscious, in his chair. Of the following days of anxious sorrow, of the shock of his death, and of the grief with which we laid him in his coffin and followed him to his grave, I have no heart to speak. There he rests, beneath the chapel which he himself built, to the glory of God—his tomb fitly crowned with that recumbent statue by Valentine, symbol of the Eternal Rest.



Such, most imperfectly sketched, was General Lee, as a college president. And surely this part of his life deserves to be remembered and commemorated by those who hold his memory dear. In it he exhibited all those great qualities of character which had made his name already so illustrious; while, in addition, he sustained trials and sorrows without which the highest perfections of that character could never have been so signally displayed. This life at Washington College, so devoted, so earnest, so laborious, so full of far-reaching plans and of wise and successful effort, was begun under the weight of a disappointment which might have broken any ordinary strength, and was maintained, in the midst of private and public misfortune, with a serene patience and a mingled firmness and sweetness of temper, which give additional brilliancy even to the glory of his former fame. It was his high privilege to meet alike the temptations and perils of the highest stations before the eyes of the world, and the cares and labors of the most responsible duties of private life under the most trying circumstances, and to exhibit, in all alike, the qualities of a great and consistent character, founded in the noblest endowments, and sustained by the loftiest principles of virtue and religion. It is a privilege henceforth for the teachers of our country that their profession, in its humble yet arduous labors, its great and its petty cares, has been illustrated by the devotion of such a man. It is an honor for all our colleges that one of them is henceforth identified with the memory of his name and of his work. It is a boon for us all; an honor to the country, which in its whole length and breadth will soon be proud to claim his fame; an honor to human nature itself, that this great character, so often and so severely tried, has thus proved itself consistent, serene and grand, alike in peace and in war, in the humblest as well as the highest offices. The "Lost Cause," indeed! No cause is wholly lost, to a people or to mankind, that produces such men, and leaves such memories, as Wade Hampton and Robert E. Lee.

Young gentlemen of the University: Would you follow Lee? No more, on the embattled field, can he lead you, as he led your fathers, to glorious victory; but in spirit and in eternal fame he still lives—the Christian soldier, the self-sacrificing patriot, the college president, the South's noblest gentleman—to remind you, by example as by precept, that "Duty is the sublimest word in the language."



GENERAL LEE AND TRAVELLER, BY MILEY, OF  
LEXINGTON. THE SCENE IS ROCK-  
BRIDGE BATHS, VIRGINIA.

















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